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[No. 3.]

WEYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

WESSAGUSSET AND WEYMOUTH,

AN HISTORICAL ADDRESS BY

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, JR.,

DELIVERED AT WEYMOUTH, JULY 4, 1874, ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT OF THE TOWN.

WEYMOUTH IN ITS FIRST TWENTY YEARS,

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY BY

GILBERT NASH,

NOVEMBER 1, 1882.

WEYMOUTH THIRTY YEARS LATER,

A PAPER READ BY

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS,

BEFORE THE

WEYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

SEPTEMBER 23, 1904.

PUBLISHED BY
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HISTORICAL ADDRESS

BY

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, Jr.,

JULY 4, 1874.

Full in sight of the spot where we are now gathered,— almost at the foot of King-Oak Hill,— stands that portion of the ancient town of Weymouth, known from time immemorial as the village of Old Spain. When or why it was first so called is wholly unknown, — scarcely a tradition even remains to suggest to us an origin of the name. None the less Old Spain well deserved a portion at least of that familiar title, for, next to the town of Plymouth, it is the oldest settlement in Massachusetts. And when we speak of the oldest settlements in Massachusetts, we speak of communities which may fairly lay claim to a very respectable degree of antiquity; not of the greatest, it is true, for all antiquity is relative, and that of America scarcely deserves the name by the side of what England has to show; but what is the antiquity of England compared with that of Rome? — and Rome, again, seems young and crude when we speak of Greece; while even those who fought upon the ringing plains of windy Troy are but as prattling children in presence of the hoary age of the Pharaohs. The settlement of Old Spain and of Weymouth is, therefore,

ancient only as things American are ancient; but still two hundred and fifty years of time carry us back to events and men which seem sufficiently remote. When the first European made his home in Old Spain,—when the earliest rude hut was framed on yonder north shore of Phillips Creek,— the modern world in which we live was just assuming shape. Few now realize how little of that which makes up the vast accumulated store of human possessions which we have inherited from our fathers — which to us is as the air we breathe,— had then existence. The Reformation was then young,— Luther and Calvin and Erasmus were men of yesterday; the life-and-death struggle with Catholicism still tortured eastern Europe. The thirty years' war in Germany was just commenced, and the youthful Gustavus Adolphus had yet to win his spurs. The blood of St. Bartholomew was but half a century old, and the murder of Henry IV. was as near to the men of 1622 as is that of Abraham Lincoln to us. The great Cardinal-Duke was then organizing modern France; Charles I. had not yet ascended the English throne; Hampden was a young country gentleman, and Oliver Cromwell an unpretending English squire. While men still believed that the sun moved round the earth, Galileo and Kepler were gradually ascertaining those laws which guide the planets in their paths; Bacon was meditating his philosophy; Don Quixote was a newly published work, with a local reputation; and Milton, not yet a Cambridge pensioner, was making his first essays at verse. Shakespeare had died but six years before, and, indeed, the first edition of his plays did not appear until the very year in which Weymouth was settled. Thus, in 1622, our world of literature, of science, almost of history, was yet to be created. Hardly a single volume of our current English literature was then in existence, and people might well con

their Bibles, for, in the English tongue, there was little else to read.

Meanwhile the North American continent was an unbroken wilderness, with here and there, few and far between, from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf, scattered specks of struggling civilization, hundreds of leagues apart, dotting the skirts of the green, primeval forest. It was at not the least famous of these scattered specks,— at the neighboring town of Plymouth,— that the history of Weymouth opened on a day towards the latter part of the month of May, in the year 1622. The little colony had then been established in its new home some seventeen months. They had just struggled through their second winter, and now, sadly reduced in number, with supplies wholly exhausted, and sorely distressed in spirit, the Pilgrims were anxiously looking for the arrival of some ship from England. The Mayflower had left them, starting on her homeward voyage a year before, and once only during their weary sojourn, in the month of the previous November, had these homesick wanderers on the sandy Plymouth shores been cheered by any tidings from the living world. On this particular day, however, the whole settlement was alive with excitement. There had been great trouble with the neighboring Indians, and the magistrates were on the point of delivering one of them up to the emissaries of his sachem to be put to death, when suddenly a boat was seen to cross the mouth of the bay and disappear behind the next headland.[1] There had been rumors of trouble between the English and the French, and the first idea of the settlers was that some connection existed between the sachem's emissaries and those on board the boat. The delivery of the prisoner was consequently deferred. At the same time, a shot was fired as a signal, in re-

[1] Winslow's Good Newes; Young's Chron. of Pilg., p. 291.

sponse to which the boat changed her course, and came into the bay. When at last it touched the shore it was found to contain ten persons, who announced themselves as being in the service of one Mr. Thomas Weston, a London merchant, well known to the elders of Plymouth. They were cordially welcomed with a salute of three volleys of musketry, and thus finished a somewhat dangerous voyage.[1] It appeared they had been dispatched from England some months before, on board a vessel named the Sparrow, which belonged to Mr. Weston, and was bound to the fishing grounds off the coast of Maine: they were, in fact, the forerunners of a larger party which Weston was organizing in London, with the design of establishing a trading settlement somewhere on the shores of Massachusetts Bay. They brought with them letters to the Plymouth magistrates, but they were wholly unprovided with either food or outfit. The Sparrow was one of the fishing fleet which yearly visited those waters, and apparently Weston's plan had been for these people to leave her near the Damariscove Islands, and thence to find their way by sea to Plymouth, examining the coast as they went along with a view to settlement. There was something curiously reckless in the methods of those old explorers. Weston himself afterwards sought to reach Plymouth in the same way, and encountered many strange adventures by sea and land before he got there. In the present case his messengers do not appear either to have been seafaring men, or especially selected for the work they had to do. It was not until they were actually leaving the Sparrow for their voyage of one hundred and fifty miles in the North Atlantic that they seemed to realize their own utter helplessness, and the extreme vagueness of their errand. Fortunately for them, however, the mate of

[1] Phinehas Pratt's Narrative; IV. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 4, p. 478.

that vessel was a daring fellow, and volunteered to venture his life as their pilot. They accordingly set sail in their shallop, skirting along the coast. They touched at the Isle of Shoals and at Cape Ann, and thence they ran for Boston harbor, where they passed some four or five days exploring. They selected the southerly side of the bay as the best place for the proposed settlement, as in these parts there seemed to be the fewest natives, and made a bargain with the sachem Aberdecest for what land they needed;[1] but, getting uneasy at the smallness of their number, they determined to go to Plymouth, in hopes of getting news of the larger enterprise. Disappointed in this, they landed to await events. The shallop, accompanied by a Plymouth boat in search of supplies, returned to the fishing fleet, and its seven passengers were, for the time being, incorporated with the colony, and fared no worse than others.

Meanwhile Mr. Weston had organized his larger expedition, and it was already on the sea, having sailed from London about the 1st of April. Thus Thomas Weston played a very prominent part in the early settlement of Weymouth, as he had already done in that of Plymouth. He was always called a merchant, but in fact he was a pure sixteenth century adventurer of the Smith and Raleigh stamp,— a man whose brain teemed with schemes for the deriving of sudden gain from the settlement of the new continent. We first get sight of him in Leyden in connection with the Pilgrim fathers,— the treasurer, the representative, the active, moving spirit of the company of Merchant Adventurers of London, who then were looking for the material with which to effect a settlement within the Virginia patent. Mr. Treasurer Weston had some acquaintance with the Leyden exiles, and, knowing how dissatisfied

[1] Pratt's Narrative; IV. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 4, pp. 478, 487.

they were with their experience in Holland, he had pitched on them as the best material for the work in hand. They were then negotiating with the Dutch government for a grant of lands in what is now New York. Weston persuaded them to abandon this scheme, promising them, on the part of his associates, aid, both in money and in shipping. When the Speedwell arrived at Southampton from Delfthaven, bearing the fortunes of the little colony between its decks, it was Weston who came down from London to arrange the last details of the adventure. But the meeting was not a propitious one. The parties fell out as to certain alterations proposed to the original agreement between them, and Weston returned to London, telling the emigrants as a parting word that they must expect no further aid from him. Out of this disagreement grew the scheme of another and independent settlement. Weston apparently concluded that he had made a mistake in his choice of agents. A mere adventurer, he looked only to pecuniary results. The return of the Mayflower in the spring of 1621 without a cargo was a great disappointment to him, and he did not delay writing to the struggling settlers that a good return cargo by the next ship was absolutely essential to the life of the enterprise. They did make an effort, therefore, to load the Fortune with such articles as the country afforded, but before the venture reached England Weston had abandoned the Plymouth colony in disgust, sold out his interest in the Merchant Adventurers' company and was already meditating his new and rival enterprise. He cared more for beaver-skins in hand than for empires hereafter, and the Plymouth people appeared to him to discourse and argue and consult when they should have been trading.[1] His confidence in the success of a trading post on Massa-

[1] Bradford ; IV. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 3, p. 107.

chusetts Bay was not shaken, but he shared in the general belief of the day that families were an incumbrance in a well organized plantation, and that a settlement made up of able-bodied men only could do more in New England in seven years than in Old England in twenty.[1] On this principle he organized his expedition, which, towards the close of April, 1622, set sail in two vessels, the Charity of one hundred tons and the Swan of thirty. It went under the charge of Weston's brother-in-law, one Richard Greene, and was made up of the roughest material, miscellaneously picked up in the streets and on the docks of London; among them, however, there was one surgeon, a Mr. Salisbury, and a lawyer from Furnival's Inn, afterwards very notorious in early colonial annals, one Thomas Morton, better known as Morton of Merry Mount.[2] Such as they were, however, they safely

[1] Levett's Voyage; III. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 8, p. 190.

[2] "So base in condition (for ye most parte) as in all apearance not fitt for an honest mans company." *Letter of John Peirce in Bradford* (p. 123). Thomas Morton describes them as "men made choice of at all adventures." *The New English Canaan* (p. 72), *Force's Hist. Tracts* (v. 2). In the preface to his Good Newes, Winslow speaks of them as "a disorderly colony, . . . who were a stain to Old England that bred them in respect of their lives and manners amongst the Indians." *Young, C. of P.* (p. 276). Weston himself speaks of them as "rude fellows," and proposes to reclaim them "from that profanenes that may scandalise ye vioage," etc. *Bradford* (p. 120). Robert Cushman in a letter to Governor Bradford, gives the following hint: "if they borrow anything of you let them leave a good pawne." *Ib.* (p. 122).

I have stated that Thomas Morton came over as one of Weston's company. This has been denied, *Young's C. of P.* (p. 334, n.), but Morton himself twice states in the New English Canaan, that he came to New England in 1622, and in one of the two cases fixes the time as in June of that year. *The New English Canaan* (pp. 15, 41), *Force's Hist. Tracts* (v. 2). Winslow states that the Charity and Swan arrived "in the end of June or beginning of July," 1622. *Young's C. of P.* (p. 296). Now no other ships from England came to Plymouth that year, and no company such as Morton describes his to have been, except Weston's, arrived in Massachusetts between 1622 and Wollaston's arrival in 1625. Morton, however, not only positively says that he arrived at the very time the Weston company arrived, but he shows throughout his book a remarkable familiarity not only with the events which occurred in the Weston settlement, but with the people composing it. A connection with that settle-

landed at Plymouth towards the end of June,— some sixty stout fellows, without apparently the remotest idea why they had come or what they had come to do. Naturally the old settlers did not look upon them as a very desirable accession to the colony, especially as they early evinced a disinclination to all honest labor and an extremely well developed appetite for green corn.[1] Having landed them, the larger ship sailed for Virginia, and during her absence preparations were completed for removing the party to the site selected for its operations at Wessagusset, as Weymouth was then called. In the course of a few weeks the ship returned, the healthy members of the expedition were taken on board and sailed for Boston Bay. The Plymouth people saw them disappear with much satisfaction, and expressed no desire to have them return.

It was August before the party reached its permanent quarters. There is no record of the exact spot

ment was not a thing which Morton would have been likely to boast of in subsequent years; but, judging by internal evidence, I should feel inclined not only to venture a surmise that Morton was one of Weston's colony, but also that it was Morton himself who proposed to the Wessagusset "Parliament" the vicarious execution presently to be described. The whole tone of his account of that affair is highly suggestive of a close connection with it, and of great sympathy with the real culprit and his ingenious counsel.

My explanation of Morton's statement as to his arrival is, that in it, with his usual recklessness as to facts, he confounded two events which occurred at different dates. He says, *The New English Canaan* (p. 41), "In the Moneth of Iune, Anno Salutis: 1622. It was my chaunce to arrive in the parts of New England with 30. Servants, and provision of all sorts fit for a plantation." Here are two facts distinctly stated; — one as to the date of his arrival, exactly coinciding with that of the Weston company; — the other as to the number of "servants," etc., answering to the description of Wollaston's company. Morton, I think, therefore, came out with Weston's company, and left Wessagusset in March, 1623, with them; he then, more than two years later, returned there with Wollaston, probably acting as his guide. When, seven years later, he printed his book, desiring to make his American experience date as far back as possible, he simply confused his two arrivals, and quietly ignored his connection with the Weston company, which had left a very unsavory reputation behind it as being made up of the refuse of mankind.

[1] Winslow; Young's C. of P., p. 297.

on which they placed their settlement, but a very general tradition assigns it to the north side of Phillips Creek[1]. Not improbably there was a better draught of water in that inlet than now; but it is well established that the locality was to the south of the Fore River, and the very sheltered character of the creek would naturally have suggested it to the explorers for the object they had in view. But wherever the exact locality may have been, the adventurers found themselves towards the end of September sufficiently established in it to let the larger ship, the Charity, return to England. The smaller one, the Swan, had been designed for the use of the plantation,— it was indeed the chief item of their stock in trade, — and it now remained moored in Weymouth River. The Charity had left the party fairly supplied for the winter,[2] but they were a wasteful, improvident set, and they were hardly left to their own devices before they were made to realize that they had already squandered most of their resources, though the winter was not yet begun. They accordingly bethought themselves of the people of Plymouth, and wrote to Governor Bradford proposing a trading voyage on joint account in search of corn, — they offering to supply the vessel while the Plymouth people were to furnish the quick capital needed, in the shape of articles of barter. The offer was accepted, and in October the expedition set out, with Standish in command and the Indian Squanto acting as guide. The intention was to weather the cape and trade along the south coast, but they were driven back by adverse winds, and then Standish fell

[1] "A correspondent in Quincy thus describes the place: 'It is about three miles south-east of the granite church in Quincy, at a place locally called Old Spain.' Weston's colony sailed up Fore River, which separates Quincy from Weymouth, and then entered Phillips Creek, and commenced operations on its north bank." *Russell's Guide to Plymouth* (p. 106, n.).

[2] Winslow; Young's C. of P., p. 299. Bradford, p. 130.

sick of a fever and had to give up the command. Governor Bradford took his place and again the Swan started out; but it was November now, and the back side of Cape Cod shewed a rougher sea than they cared to face, so they prudently put about and ran into Sandwich Bay. Here Squanto, the Indian guide, fell sick and died, bequeathing his few effects to his English friends and praying that he might find rest with the Englishman's God.[1] Here and elsewhere, however, the partners secured some twenty-six or twenty-eight hogsheads of corn and beans, and with that were fain to return. An equal division was made, and the Swan again came to her moorings in Weymouth Fore River.

The relief she brought with her was, however, only temporary; disorder and waste in that settlement were chronic. Greene had died in Plymouth while they were preparing for the trading voyage, and a man named Sanders had succeeded him in control. Either he was incompetent or his people were very hard to manage; but, in either case, the squandering of the supplies continued, and the prudent Plymouth settlers complained that, through improvident dealings with the Indians, their neighbors ruined the market, giving for a quart of corn what before would have bought a beaver-skin.[2] At length, however, about the beginning of the New Year, the Wessagusset plantation found itself face to face with dire want. The hungry settlers bartered with the Indians, giving everything they had for food; they even stripped the clothes from their backs and the blankets from their beds. They made canoes for the savages, and, for a mere pittance of corn, became their hewers of wood and drawers of water.[3] During that long and dreary winter they must

[1] Bradford, p. 128. [2] Winslow; Young's C. of P., p. 302.
[3] Bradford, p. 130.

heartily have wished themselves back in the slums of London. Weymouth Fore River, in that season, must then have been very much what we so well know it to be now. Doubtless the cold tide ebbed and flowed before the rude block-house, now lifting on its bosom huge heaps of frozen snow and ice, and then again bearing them in great unsightly blocks swiftly out to sea. The frost was in the ground; the snow was on it. So, through the long, hard, savage winter, those seventy poor hungry wretches shivered around their desolate habitations, or straggled about among the neighboring wigwams in search of food. Their ammunition was nearly exhausted so that they could not kill the game. They ransacked the woods in search of nuts; and they followed out the tide, digging in the flats for clams and muscles. But, insufficiently supplied with clothes, they could not endure the winter's cold in this slow search for food, and one poor fellow while grubbing for shell-fish sank into the mud, and, being too reduced to drag himself out, was there found dead, — an end to his adventures. In all ten perished.[1]

In their necessities they had made the fatal mistake of degrading themselves before the savages. In their utmost needs the Plymouth people had always borne themselves defiantly to the Indian; making him feel himself in presence of a superior. It was not so at Wessagusset. The settlers there alternately cringed before the Indian and abused him; and he, seeing them so poor and weak and helpless, first grew to despise and then to oppress them. Naturally, starving men of their description had recourse to theft, and there was no one to steal from but the Indians; so the Indians found their hidden stores of corn disturbed and knew

[1] Pratt's Petition; IV. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 4, pp. 486, 7. Bradford, p. 130. Winslow; Young's C. of P., p. 332.

just where to look for the thieves. This led to a bitter feeling among the savages, and some who were detected were punished in their sight. But with men like these, punishment was a less terror than starvation, and the depredations and complaints continued. The Indians would no longer either lend or sell them food; and, indeed, it did not appear that they had any to spare.[1] Finally, in their utter desperation, the settlers thought of having recourse to violence, and made ready their stockade to resist the attack, sure to ensue, by closing every entrance into it save one. They were hardly prepared, however, to go to such extremes as this, relying solely on their own strength. Accordingly, towards the end of February, Sanders sent a letter by an Indian messenger to Governor Bradford, informing him of their necessities, and advising him that Sanders himself was preparing to go to the fishing stations at the eastward to buy provisions from the ships; but meanwhile he did not see how the settlement was to live until his return, and he therefore wrote to see if the Plymouth people would sustain him in taking what was necessary from the Indians by force. The answer was not encouraging. The Plymouth magistrates had no intention of embroiling that settlement with its savage neighbors, and therefore very plainly informed Sanders that he and his need expect no countenance from them in any such proceeding as that proposed; and they further intimated an opinion that they would all be killed if they attempted it. Finally, they advised them to worry through the winter, living on nuts and shell-fish as they themselves were doing, especially as they enjoyed the additional advantage of an oyster-bed, which they of Plymouth had not.[2] On receiving this letter, it only remained to

[1] Winslow; Young's C. of P., p. 328.
[2] Winslow; Young's C. of P., p. 329.

give up all idea of a recourse to violence, and Sanders then took the Swan and himself went to Plymouth on a begging excursion. The people there, however, felt unable to supply his vessel even for a voyage to the fishing stations; so he returned to Wessagusett, there left the Swan, and started on a shallop for the coast of Maine.

Meanwhile the depredations still went on, and the Indians grew more and more aggressive. They took by force from the settlers what they pleased, and if they remonstrated, threatened them with their knives. Apparently they treated the poor wretches like dogs; regarding them much as they had four unfortunate Frenchmen whom they had taken prisoners some years before, after destroying their vessel, killing them at last through ill usage.[1] Finally, one unfortunate but peculiarly skillful thief was detected and bitter complaint made against him. The terror-stricken settlers offered to give him up to the savages, to be dealt with as they saw fit. The savages, however, declined to receive him, upon which his companions hung him themselves in their sight. This execution has since been very famous. That the settlers of Wessagusset hung the real culprit does not admit of question, for it is so stated both by those who were present and by the Plymouth authorities of the time, who were perfectly familiar with all the facts.[2] But the humorous Mr. Thomas Morton of Merry Mount, in the New English Canaan, published in London in 1632, reclad the Wes-

[1] Pratt's Narrative; IV. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 4, pp. 479, 489. New English Canaan, p. 18; Force's Tracts, v. 2.

[2] Winslow, in his Relation, states that Pratt told them of this execution on his arrival at Plymouth. *Young's C. of P.* (p. 332); *see, also, Bradford* (p. 130). But Pratt, in his own Narrative, distinctly says that "we kep him (the malefactor) bound som few days," but does not mention the execution. *IV. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.* (v. 4, p. 482). In his Relation by Mather, however, he states that the real delinquent was put to death. *Ib.* (p. 491).

sagusset hanging of ten years previous in this new and fantastic garb:

"One amongst the rest an able bodied man, that ranged the woodes, to see what it would afford, lighted by accident on an Indian barne, and from thence did take a capp full of corne; the Salvage owner of it, finding by the foote some English had bin there came to the Plantation, and mad complaint after this manner.

"The cheife Commander of the Company one this occation called a Parliament of all his people but those that were sicke, and ill at ease. And wisely now they must consult, upon this huge complaint, that a privy knife, or stringe of beades would well enough have qualified, and Edward Iohnson was a spetiall judge of this businesse; the fact was there in repetition, construction made, that it was fellony, and by the Lawes of England punished with death, and this in execution must be put, for an example, and likewise to appease the Salvage, when straight wayes one arose, mooved as it were with some compassion, and said hee could not well gaine say the former sentence, yet hee had conceaved within the compasse of his braine a Embrion, that was of spetiall consequence to be delivered, and cherished hee said, that it would most aptly serve to pacifie the Salvages complaint, and save the life of one that might (if neede should be) stand them in some good steede, being younge and stronge, fit for resistance against an enemy, which might come unexpected for any thinge they knew. The Oration made was liked of every one, and hee intreated to proceede to shew the meanes how this may be performed: sayes hee, you all agree that one must die, and one shall die, this younge mans cloathes we will take of, and put upon one, that is old and impotent, a sickly person that cannot escape death, such is the disease one him confirmed,

that die hee must, put the younge mans cloathes on this man, and let the sick person be hanged in the others steede. Amen sayes one, and so sayes many more.

"And this had like to have prooved their finall sentence, and being there confirmed by Act of Parliament, to after ages for a President: But that one with a ravenus voyce, begunne to croake and bellow for revenge, and put by that conclusive motion, alledging such deceipts might be a meanes here after to exasperate the mindes of the complaininge Salvages and that by his death, the Salvages should see their zeale to Iustice, and therefore hee should die: this was concluded; yet neverthelesse a scruple was made; now to countermaunde this act, did represent itselfe unto their mindes, which was how they should doe to get the mans good wil: this was indeede a spetiall obstacle: for without (that they all agreed) it would be dangerous, for any man to attempt the execution of it, lest mischiefe should befall them every man; he was a person, that in his wrath, did seeme to be a second Sampson, able to beate out their branes with the jawbone of an Asse: therefore they called the man and by perswation got him fast bound in jest, and then hanged him up hard by in good earnest, who with a weapon, and at liberty, would have put all those wise judges of this Parliament to a pitifull *non plus* (as it hath been credibly reported), and made the cheife Iudge of them all buckell to him."[1]

The work from which this extract is taken was published in 1632; in 1663, thirty-one years later, appeared the second part of the famous English satire, Hudibras. Butler, its author, had come across the New English Canaan, and the very original idea of vicarious atonement suggested in it entertained him hugely. He

[1] The New English Canaan, p. 74.

appropriated and improved it, adapting the facts to his own fancy, until at last the story appeared in its new guise, in what was the most popular English book of the day:

> Our Brethren of New-England use
> Choice malefactors to excuse,
> And hang the Guiltless in their stead,
> Of whom the Churches have less need;
> As lately 't happen'd: In a town
> There liv'd a Cobler, and but one,
> That out of Doctrine could cut Use,
> And mend men's lives as well as shoes.
> This precious Brother having slain,
> In times of peace, an Indian,
> Not out of malice, but mere zeal,
> (Because he was an Infidel),
> The mighty Tottipottymoy
> Sent to our Elders an envoy,
> Complaining sorely of the breach
> Of league held forth by Brother Patch,
> Against the articles in force
> Between both churches, his and ours,
> For which he craved the Saints to render
> Into his hands, or hang, th' offender;
> But they maturely having weigh'd
> They had no more but him o' th' trade,
> (A man that served them in a double
> Capacity, to teach and cobble),
> Resolv'd to spare him; yet to do
> The Indian Hogan Moghan too
> Impartial justice, in his stead did
> Hang an old Weaver that was bed-rid.[1]

The really amusing part of this episode, however, yet remains to be told. When it was rescued from oblivion, through the wit of Butler, in 1663, the reaction against Puritanism was at its height, and everything which tended to render the sect, so recently all-powerful, either odious or ridiculous, was eagerly sought for and implicitly believed. New England, and especially the province of Massachusetts Bay, was out of favor. So striking an exemplification of Puritan

[1] Hudibras, Part II, Canto II, ll. 409–36.

justice was not to be disregarded. The whole absurd fiction of Morton and Butler was, therefore, not only accepted as historical truth, but the bastard tradition was solemnly deposited at the door of the good people of Boston and Plymouth: — and so the Weymouth hanging passed into history hand in hand with the famous Blue-Laws of Connecticut. There is, however, something irresistibly ludicrous in picturing to oneself the horror and dismay with which the severe elders of the Plymouth church would have contemplated the saddling of their fame before posterity, on the ribald authority of the New English Canaan and of Hudibras, with the apocryphal misdeeds of Weston's vagabonds. But so it happened, and nearly a century and a half later the absurd fiction was gravely recorded in his history by Governor Hutchinson, as a part of the early annals of New England.[1]

But it is necessary to return to Weston's colony. We left it face to face with famine, deserted by its leader, and in terror of the savages; in the wish to propitiate whom the starving, shivering outcasts had just hung one of their own number in front of their palisade. Even this, however, did not appease the Indians, who were now thoroughly restless and had begun to conspire together all along the coast for the simultaneous destruction of both the infant settlements. It was just one year since the Virginia massacre, and that tragedy seemed about to be re-enacted in New England. Intimations of the impending danger reached the Plymouth and the Weymouth people at about the same time; coming to the former through a friendly hint from Massasoit, and to the latter from the talk of an Indian woman.

[1] Hist. of Mass., v. 1, p. 6, n.; — for a curious traditionary account of this execution see, also, *Uring's Voyages* (pp. 116-18), and *Proceedings of Mass. Hist. Soc. for 1871* (p. 59).

The Indians were now watching the Wessagusset settlement very closely. In spite of their terror, the settlers, however, lived on in a reckless way, mixing freely with the savages and taking no precautions against surprise.[1] But one at least of their number was thoroughly alarmed, and had resolved to make his escape to Plymouth. This was Phinehas Pratt, one of the seven who had come on in the shallop during the previous May in advance of the body of the enterprise. The journey he now proposed to himself was both difficult and dangerous. It was March, and he was insufficiently clad and weak for want of food; he did not know the way, nor did he even have a compass. The Indians, probably in furtherance of their half-matured conspiracy, had gradually moved their wigwams closer and closer to the settlement. Pratt's first object was to steal away unobserved by them. Very early one morning, therefore, preparing a small pack, he took a hoe in his hand and left the settlement as if he were in search of nuts, or about to dig for shell-fish. He went directly towards that end of the swamp nearest the wigwams. Getting close to them he pretended to be busy digging, until he had satisfied himself that he was unobserved; then he suddenly plunged into the thicket and began to make his way as rapidly as he could in a southerly direction. The sky was overcast; the ground also was in many places covered with snow, which greatly alarmed him, as it seemed likely to afford an almost certain trail in case of pursuit. Fortunately for him he at once lost his way, or he must soon have been overtaken. He hurried along, however, as fast as he could, until late in the afternoon, when the sun appeared sufficiently to give him some indication of his course. He at length came to the North River, which he found both deep

[2] Winslow; Young's C. of P., p. 336.

and cold; he succeeded in fording it, however, and, as night began to fall, found himself too weary to go further, weak from cold and hunger and yet afraid to light a fire. Finally he came to a deep hollow in which were many fallen trees; here he stopped, lit a fire and rested, listening to the howling of the wolves in the woods around him. At night the sky cleared and he distinguished the north star, thus getting his bearings. He resumed his journey in the morning but found himself unable to proceed with it, and so returned to his camping place of the previous night. The succeeding day, however, was clear, and he started again; this time more successfully, for by three o'clock in the afternoon he got to Duxbury and recognized the landmarks; soon afterwards reaching the settlement, thoroughly exhausted, but in safety. He thus finished a perilous journey, for the pursuers were not far behind him. The next day they appeared on the outskirts of the settlement and assured themselves of his arrival. They had lost his trail, and, following the more direct path, had missed him; but nevertheless he had, as he himself expressed it, "been pursued for his life in time of frost and snow as a deer chased by the wolves."[1]

[1] *Pratt's Narrative; IV. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.* (v. 4, pp. 483–7), can be accepted as authority only with very decided limitations. Prepared for a specific purpose, long subsequent to the occurrence of the events to which it relates, it is neither consistent with itself nor with the Plymouth authorities. He dwells at length on the apprehension of an attack by the Indians felt by the Weston colony, and the precautions they took against it (pp. 482–3). Standish, on the contrary, reported that he found them living in reckless disregard of every precaution. *Winslow, in Young's C. of P.* (p. 336.) Pecksuot's famous speech to Standish, which Pratt must often have heard discussed at Plymouth, finds a place in his narrative as having been made to him long previously (p. 481). Finally, if the terror at Wessagusset was such as he asserts it to have been, the settlers there could have gone on board the Swan and sailed to Plymouth in search of aid, quite as well as Standish could come to them or they go subsequently to the eastward. Pratt himself was unquestionably both alarmed and hungry, but he probably fled to Plymouth as a refugee. When he got there, having doubtless encountered enough of danger and hardship on

He now delivered his tidings and was cared for, but found the Plymouth settlement fully awake to the danger. The council had already the subject under advisement, and, the day before Pratt's arrival, had decided upon war. Their proceedings were vigorous. Captain Miles Standish was authorized to take with him such a force as was in his judgment sufficient to enable him to hold his own against all the Indians in the neighborhood of Boston Bay, and go at once to Wessagusset. He did not apparently place a very high estimate either on the numbers or the valor of his opponents, for he selected only eight men,[2] and with them was on the point of starting when Pratt arrived. The next day, March 25, 1623, the wind proved fair, and so the little army got into its boat and set sail.

Reaching Weymouth Fore River on the 26th, after a prosperous voyage, Standish steered directly for the Swan, which was lying at her moorings near the settlement. Greatly to his surprise he found her wholly deserted,— there was not a soul on board. A musket was fired as a signal, which attracted the attention of a few miserable creatures busy searching for nuts. From them Standish learned that the principal men of the settlement were in the stockade; so he landed, and, after some conversation with them, promptly began his preparations. The stragglers were all called in, and every one was forbidden to go beyond gunshot from the stockade. Rations of corn were issued to all out of the slender stock which the prudent Ply-

the way, he found Standish already starting for Wessagusset. His own sense of the dangers he had run and the heroism he had displayed, both before and during his flight, probably grew with each succeeding year. I have adopted only such of his statements as are corroborated by others, or seem to wear an aspect of inherent probability.

[2] The whole number of Indians in that vicinity was not computed at over fifty. *Young's Chron. of Mass.* (p. 305). *Winslow; Young's C. of P.* (p. 310).

mouth people had reserved for seed, and something like discipline was established. The weather was wet and stormy, delaying final operations, but the Indians, nevertheless, seeing Standish on the ground, began to suspect that their designs were discovered. Pecksuot, their chief, accordingly came in and had an interview, Hobbamock, a friendly Indian who had accompanied the expedition, acting as interpreter.

This was one of the very famous Indian talks of early New England annals; not only was it chronicled in all the records of the time, but it has since found a place in poetry, so that to-day the speech of the savage Pecksuot to the doughty Miles Standish is most familiar to us through the verses of Longfellow[1]: —

> Then he unsheathed his knife, and, whetting the blade on his left hand,
> Held it aloft, and displayed a woman's face on the handle,
> Saying, with bitter expression and look of sinister meaning:
> "I have another at home, with the face of a man on the handle;
> By and by they shall marry; and there will be plenty of children!"

This figurative language both Standish and his Indian interpreter accepted as meaning war. At the moment, however, no act of overt hostility took place on either side. Standish was not ready. His plan was to strike, but when he struck he meant to strike hard. He proposed, in fact, to get all the Indians he could into his power and then to kill them.[2] The day after the knife interview he found himself with several of his men in a room with four of the savages, among whom were Pecksuot and Wituwamat. Suddenly Standish gave the signal and flung himself on Pecksuot, snatching his knife from its sheath on his neck and stabbing him with it. The door was closed and a life-and-death struggle ensued. The savages were

[1] The Courtship of Miles Standish, Part VII. See also Pratt's Narrative; IV. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 4, p. 481, and Young's C. of P., p. 338.

[2] Winslow; Young's C. of P., p. 331. Bradford, p. 164.

taken by surprise, but they fought hard, making little noise but catching at their weapons and struggling until they were cut almost to pieces. Finally Pecksuot, Wituwamat and a third Indian were killed; while a fourth, a youth of eighteen, was overpowered and secured; him, Standish subsequently hung. The massacre, for such in historic justice it must be called, seeing that they killed every man they could lay their hands on, then began. There were eight warriors in the stockade at the time,— Standish and his party had killed three and secured one; they subsequently killed another, while the Weston people despatched two more. One only escaped to give the alarm, which was rapidly spread through the Indian villages.

Standish immediately followed up his advantage. Leaving some Indian women, who happened to be in the stockade, in charge of a portion of his own men and of the settlers, he took one or two of the latter and the remainder of his own force, and started in pursuit. He had gone no great distance when a file of Indians was seen advancing. Both parties hurried forward to secure the advantage of a rising ground near at hand. Standish got to it first, and the savages at once scattered, sheltering themselves behind trees and discharging a flight of arrows at their opponents. The engagement was, however, very brief, for Hobbamock, throwing off his coat, rushed at his countrymen, who incontinently fled to the swamp; one only of the party being injured, a shot breaking his arm. Further pursuit was unavailing, so Standish returned to the stockade, from which he caused the Indian women to be dismissed unharmed.

The Weston people now discovered that they had had enough of life in the wilderness, and wholly declined to tarry any longer at Wessagusset. Standish asserted his readiness to hold the place against all the

Indians of the vicinage with half the force of the Weston party, but they were not Standishes, nor did they feel any call to heroism. So, the choice being given to them, they divided, — one portion, on board the Swan, following Sanders to the coast of Maine, while the rest accompanied Standish home and cast in their lot among the Plymouth people. Standish supplied those on board the Swan with a sufficiency of corn whereon to sustain life, and saw them safely leave the harbor and bear away to the north and east; then he himself, carrying with him the head of Wituwamat, to ornament the Plymouth block-house as a terror to all evil-disposed savages, sailed prosperously home.

Thus in failure, disgrace and bloodshed ended the first attempt of a settlement at Weymouth. Ill-conceived, ill-executed, ill-fated, it was probably saved from utter extirpation only by the energetic interference of the Plymouth people. And these last not unjustifiably indulged in some grim chuckling over the speedy downfall of those who had thought to teach them how to subdue a wilderness.[1] Three men only remained behind at Wessagusset. One of these had domesticated himself among the savages; the other two, in defiance of orders, had straggled off to an Indian settlement where they had been left by a companion on the day of the engagement. All three were put to death by the savages, probably with that refinement of cruelty which distinguished Indian executions; for, afterwards, in speaking of their fate, one of the savages said, "When we killed your men they cried and made ill-favored faces."[2]

When good old John Robinson, at Leyden, heard of the Wessagusset killing he was sorely moved. He

[1] Bradford, p. 132.

[2] Pratt's Narrative; IV. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 4, p. 486. New English Canaan, p. 76; Force's Tracts, v. 2. Young's C. of P., p. 344.

wrote out to his flock a letter of gentle caution in respect to the rough ways of Captain Miles Standish, who, though the aged pastor loved him, he yet intimated was one perchance "wanting that tenderness of the life of man which is meet." He also referred to the Wessagusset settlers as "heathenish Christians," and exclaimed in reference to Pecksuot and Wituwamat, "Oh! how happy a thing had it been if you had converted some before you had killed any."[1] Nevertheless, rough as he was, the Plymouth people then stood in greater need of stern Miles Standish than of gentle John Robinson. The times were not meet for works of conversion, nor were Pecksuot and his friends favorable subjects therefor. In the light of the Virginia experience of 1622, and of the New England terror during the war of King Philip, posterity must concede that the severe course of Miles Standish here in Weymouth, in March, 1623, was the most truly merciful course. The settlers had demoralized the Indians. They had at once inspired them with anger, with dislike and with contempt. Any sign of faltering on the part of the Plymouth people would have been fatal. Had they abandoned Wessagusset to its fate, the settlers there would have been exterminated, and the savages, maddened by a taste of blood, would have turned upon Plymouth. The woods would have rung with war-whoops and the feeble colony could scarcely have survived the ordeal of blood treading hard on that of famine. Standish crushed out the danger in the incipient stage. By ruthlessly murdering seven men he re-established the moral ascendency of the whites, and so saved the lives of hundreds. He stopped the war before it began, and deferred it to another generation. In so doing, the Puritan captain revealed the instinctive sagacity of a true soldier,—

[1] Bradford, p. 164.

he struck so that he did not have to strike twice: — he cowed the savages at Weymouth, and for years peace was secured for Plymouth.[1]

All this took place in March, and, shortly after, the unfortunate Mr. Weston arrived on the coast of Maine, seeking news of his colony. He there heard of its ruin and, with one or two men, started in a small boat for Wessagusset. His ill-fortune pursued him. Overtaken by a storm he was cast away near where Newburyport now stands, and barely saved his life only to fall into the hands of the savages, who stripped him to his shirt. He succeeded, however, in finding his way back to the fishing stations in Maine and thence to Plymouth. The people there received him kindly, and loaned him some beaver-skins on which to trade: and again he returned to the eastward. There he found his smaller vessel, the Swan, and some of his people. Afterwards he seems to have been both very adventurous and very unfortunate. He made frequent voyages to Virginia, and now and again flits vaguely across the page of Plymouth history, — in debt, in trouble, in arrest. Finally he returned to England, where, long afterwards, during the wars of Cromwell, he died of the plague at Bristol.

But Wessagusset was not destined long to remain a solitude. Deserted in March, it was again occupied just six months later; for, in the middle of September, 1623, Captain Robert Gorges, a son of that Sir Ferdinand whose name is so prominent in the early annals of New England, sailed up the Fore River, and landed at Weston's deserted plantation. His enterprise was of a quite different character from that which had preceded it. He held a grant from the Council of New England, covering a tract of land vaguely described as lying on the north-east side of Massachusetts Bay, as

[1] Winslow; Young's C. of P., p. 344. The New English Canaan, p. 73.

what is now known as Boston Bay was then called, and covering ten miles of sea-front, while stretching thirty miles into the interior. He was also commissioned as Governor-General, and authorized to correct any abuses which had crept into the affairs of the company in America; for the more effectual doing of which he was further provided with a grand admiral and a council, of which the Governor of Plymouth for the time being was *ex officio* a member. His jurisdiction was of the largest description, civil, criminal and ecclesiastical, for he also brought with him in his company one Mr. William Morell, a clergyman of the Church of England, holding a commission from the ecclesiastical courts of the mother country, which authorized him to exercise a species of superintendency over the churches of the colony. This whole expedition seems, in fact, to have been organized on a most ludicrously grandiose scale, probably to meet the views of its commander, who had recently seen some service in the Venetian wars and was now nourishing ambitious visions of an empire in the wilderness. The establishment of Episcopacy in New England had long been a favorite idea with Sir Ferdinand Gorges,[1] and now, when he sent his son thither, he provided him not only with a council and an admiral, but also with a primate. This company was, however, composed of a different material from that of Weston's. It was made up of families, as well as of individuals, and contained in it some elements of strength.[2] The party disembarked just as the autumn tints began to glow through the forest, and busied themselves with the erection of their storehouses. Captain Gorges meanwhile notified the Plymouth people of his arrival, and Governor Bradford prepared to answer the summons in person. Before he could do so, however, Gorges started on a

[1] Young's C. of P., p. 477, n. [2] Bradford, p. 148.

voyage to the fishing stations in Maine; but, encountering some rough weather on his way, he put about and ran into Plymouth in search of a pilot. He remained there some fourteen days, and then, instead of resuming his voyage, he returned to Wessagusset by land. Upon reaching his seat of government he, for the first, and, so far as appears, for the last time, made any use of his great civil and military powers by causing Weston, who had turned up in Plymouth Bay, on board the Swan, to be arrested and sent with this vessel around to Weymouth. His own ship, meanwhile, remained at Plymouth, where, on the 5th of November, her company occasioned a great disaster to the unfortunate colonists. The weather was cold, and a number of seamen were celebrating Guy Fawkes' day before a large fire in one of the houses, when the thatch ignited, and, for a brief time, it was a question whether the general storehouse, and with it the Plymouth colony, were not to be destroyed. Fortunately only three or four houses were burned, but it is curious to reflect how much more heavily the loss of those few log huts bore on the Plymouth of those days than did the great conflagration of two centuries and a half later on the Boston of ours. At any rate it seemed to sicken Captain Robert Gorges and his party, for, shortly after it, he retired to England, thoroughly disgusted with the work of founding empires in the New World.[1] With him returned the larger part of his company, but not the whole of it; nor, indeed, does Weymouth seem ever again to have been abandoned as a settlement. While some of the party went to Virginia, others remained at Wessagusset, and Mr. Morell took up his temporary abode at Plymouth. This gentleman appears, indeed, to have been not only a man of education and refinement, but also to have been possessed

[1] Bradford, p. 154.

of discretion and good sense. For a wonder he, an ecclesiastic, remained at Plymouth nearly a year with a letter in his pocket conferring on him great powers, and yet he neither sought to exercise any authority, nor did he intrigue or stir up any trouble. On the contrary, he quietly minded his own business, and beguiled his leisure hours in the composition of a very good Latin poem descriptive of the country.[1] He made of it, too, a very bad metrical translation. The piece is curious, but now scarcely repays perusal.[2] With the country he was charmed, but not so with the natives who inhabited it. Indeed, he seems to have been impressed with America much as Bishop Reginald Heber was, long afterwards, with India, for he described his diocese in language similar to that used by the latter dignitary:

> "Though every prospect pleases,
> And only man is vile."

A few very brief extracts will give a sufficient idea both of the spirit of his poem and of the otherwise than smoothness of his versification. It is Weymouth itself, perhaps, that he thus describes: —

> "The fruitfull and well watered earth doth glad
> All hearts, when Flora 's with her spangles clad,
> And yeelds an hundred fold for one,
> To feede the bee and to invite the drone.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "There nature's bounties, though not planted are,
> Great store and sorts of berries great and faire:
> The filberd, cherry and the fruitful vine,
> Which cheares the heart and makes it more divine.
> Earth's spangled beauties pleasing smell and sight;
> Objects for gallant choice and chiefe delight.
>
> . . . . . .

[1] Ecclesiastical History of Massachusetts; I. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 9, p. 6.

[2] Both poem and translation are to be found in I. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 1, p. 125.

"All ore that maine the vernant trees abound,
Where cedar, cypres, spruce and beech are found.
Ash, oake and wal-nut, pines and junipere;
The hasel, palme and hundred more are there.
Ther's grasse and hearbs contenting man and beast,
On which both deare, and beares, and wolves do feast."

When he comes to deal with the noble savage, however, his enthusiasm rapidly wanes: —

"They're wondrous cruell, strangely base and vile,
Quickly displeas'd, and hardly reconcil'd;
. . . . . .

"Whose hayre is cut with greeces, yet a locke
Is left; the left side bound up in a knott:
. . . . . .

"Of body straight, tall, strong, mantled in skin
Of deare or bever, with the hayre-side in;
. . . . . .

"A kind of *pinsen* keeps their feet from cold,
Which after travels they put off, up-fold,
Themselves they warme, their ungirt limbes they rest
In straw, and houses, like to sties."

The Rev. William Morell, however, the next year (1624), abandoned both the wilderness and the savages, returning to England; and with him Episcopacy, that exotic in New England, withdrew for many years from these shores. The settlement at Weymouth was not for all that wholly broken up. This statement now admits of conclusive proof; for while previous to Robert Gorges' arrival at Weymouth the region about Boston Bay had been wholly unoccupied, from that time forward there is evidence of scattered plantations upon its islands and along its shores. The Plymouth annals distinctly state that some few of his people remained behind when he withdrew, and were assisted from thence.[1] Two years later, the next settlers in that vicinity find them still at Wessagusset.[2] Two years later yet they re-appear in history, as we shall pres-

[1] Bradford, p. 154. [2] The New English Canaan, p. 84.

ently see. In 1631, or three years later, the persons through whom the place thus re-appears take the oath as freemen on the settlement of Boston.[1] In 1632, Governor Winthrop visited Wessagusset and was liberally entertained by those residing there.[2] The next year, the place is described as a "small village";[3] and finally, in 1636, it sends as a deputy to the General Court one of those who had been prominent in connection with events there in 1628.[4] There is, therefore, but one year, 1624, unaccounted for, between the Gorges' settlement and the incorporation of the town in 1635. But the evidence does not stop here. When Captain Gorges returned to England, the records of the Council of New England state that he left his plantation in charge of certain persons, who are referred to as "his servants, and certain other Undertakers and Tenants."[6] Shortly after, Robert Gorges died and his brother John succeeded to the grant. He undertook to convey a portion of it to one John Oldham, and accordingly wrote to William Blackstone and William Jeffries, two of the settlers on Boston Bay, to put his grantee in possession.

And now we come to a most interesting point in connection with the earliest records of Boston. When Winthrop and his company landed in Charlestown in 1630, they found this William Blackstone already settled on the opposite peninsula in what is now Boston.[6]

[1] Records of Mass., v. 1, p. 366. [2] Savage's Winthrop, v. 1, p. 91.
[3] Wood's New England's Prospect; Young's Chron. of Mass., p. 395.
[4] Records of Mass., v. 1, pp. 174–9. [5] Hazard's Hist. Coll., v. 1, p. 391.
[6] As respects Blackstone, see *Young's Chron. of Mass.* (p. 169), but the best account of this singular and interesting man is found in Bliss' History of Rehoboth. It is another point of some importance as identifying Blackstone with the Gorges settlement, that he had received Episcopal ordination in England. *II. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.* (v. 9, p. 174.) Now the Gorges settlement was a distinct and the only attempt to plant Episcopacy in early Massachusetts. Morell and Blackstone were both educated and studious men of somewhat similar cast of minds and thought. The obvious and natural explanation of their presence in the wilderness would be that they came there together, influenced by the same inducements.

He had then been there some five or six years, but how he got there or from whence has always been a mystery. There he was, however. Now when John Gorges proposed to make over to Oldham his brother's grant of land, he naturally would have sent his directions to those "servants," "undertakers" or "tenants," who had been left in possession of it by his brother. As a matter of fact he did send his instructions to Blackstone and Jeffries, and the last named then was living at Wessagusset, while both were within the limits of the patent. The inference is difficult to resist that both had belonged to the Gorges settlement,— that one had remained on its site, while the other had moved away about a year after Gorges left to a locality which pleased him better. That Jeffries was settled at Weymouth admits of no question, for when that place next appears in the authentic records of the time it is under a double name, both as Wessagusset and as Jeffries and Burslem's plantation.

The whole chain of connected evidence, therefore, not only tends to shew the continuing settlement of Weymouth after September, 1623, but it also establishes the strong presumption that Boston itself was first occupied by a straggling recluse from what is now called the village of Old Spain.

The two hundred and fifty-first year of the consecutive settlement of Weymouth will, therefore, as I conceive, be completed during the month of September next; nor can I find any sufficient authority for the generally accepted statement that an additional body of settlers arrived during the year 1624, from the town of the same name in England, having with them the Rev. Mr. Barnard, who died here after a ministration

of eleven years.[1] With the departure of Captain Robert Gorges the Wessagusset settlement practically vanishes from the page of cotemporary history, only to re-appear again four years later in connection with a very famous incident. By one authority only during the intervening time do I find its name mentioned. Mr. Thomas Morton of Merry Mount, he of cobbler atonement memory, refers to it as a place to which he had recourse in winter "to have the benefit of company";[2]

[1] A statement to this effect has crept into the generally accepted accounts of the settlement of Weymouth, on the high authority of Prince's Annals. *Emery Memorial* (p. 88). The entry in Prince is at the close of 1624, and reads as follows: — "This Year comes some Addition to the few inhabitants of Wessagusset, from Weymouth in England; who are another sort of people than the Former (*mst*) [and on whose account I conclude the Town is since called Weymouth.]" To this entry the compiler appended the following foot-note: "They have the Rev. Mr. Barnard their first Non-conformist Minister, who dies among them: But whether He comes before or after 1630, or when He Dies is yet unknown (*mst*) nor do I anywhere find the least Hint of Him, but in the Manuscript Letters, taken from some of the oldest People at Weymouth." *Annals* (p. 150).

Prince compiled his work more than a century after the events here alleged to have taken place. He carefully gives his authority, as was his custom, for his statement, and himself discredits it. It seems, so far as the date was concerned, to have been a mere "oldest inhabitant" tradition, which wholly lacked corroboration by the contemporaneous authorities. The party from Weymouth, in England, settled at Dorchester in July, 1633. *Prince; II. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.* (v. 7, p. 96). In 1635, Massachiel Barnard, an elder not a minister, came out with the party mentioned by Winthrop and in the Records of Massachusetts as being placed at Weymouth. This party included not only the Rev. Mr. Hull, but the original bearers of several of the names now most common in Weymouth, such as Bicknell, Lovell, Pool, Upham, Porter, &c. See *N. E. Gen. Reg.* (v. 25, p. 13). It is safe to say that the date of 1624 given in Prince is wholly erroneous. If the permanent settlement of Weymouth does not belong to 1623, no precise date for it can be assigned; but I cannot see any room for doubt as to September, 1623.

The discovery, in 1870, of the names of those who came out with Mr. Hull, in 1635, is very important in the genealogy of Weymouth. It is singular to study in the several lists of names which have at various times been made out, the fate of the families which bore them. Some, the Kings and Kingmans for instance, have never increased, but are still perpetuated by single families in Weymouth; others like Jeffries and Bursley have disappeared; while yet others, like the Bicknells, Frenches and Lovells have increased amazingly. Lists of names found in the town at various epochs are printed in the Appendix to the Address, with indications and figures shewing the apparent increase or disappearance of the families.

[2] New English Canaan, pp. 84, 86.

and he seems to have been upon tolerably familiar terms with those living there, as several years after he wrote to William Jeffries, addressing him as "My very good gossip."[1] These visits of Morton were made between the years 1625 and 1628. Once only does he refer to the place in connection with any clergyman, and then it is with one notorious enough in the early annals, but of a different stripe from what the Rev. Mr. Barnard is supposed to have been.[2] With this single exception, Wessagusset, between 1623 and 1628, is referred to by the chroniclers of the day only as included in several weak and scattered plantations. In 1628, however, it again asserted an existence. It happened in this wise. The year after Captain Robert Gorges had retired in disgust, a certain Captain Wollaston had made his appearance in Boston Bay, in company with several associates, bringing with him a party of hired people with a view to establishing a permanent trading post. He selected, as best adapted for his purpose, the rising ground over against Wessagusset to the north, which in his honor was called Mount Wollaston, the name by which it has ever since been known. This spot had some time previously been the home of

[1] Hubbard, p. 428.

[2] This was the Rev. John Lyford. A detailed account of the somewhat high handed proceedings of the Plymouth authorities in regard to this individual and John Oldham is found in Bradford's History. The ceremonial of Oldham's expulsion from Plymouth was formal but peculiar. Morton gives the following account of it: "A lane of Musketiers was made, and hee compelled in scorne to passe along betweene, & to receave a bob upon the bumme be every musketier, and then a board a shallop, and so convayed to Wessaguscus shoare & staid at Massachussets, to whome Iohn Layford and some few more did resort, where Master Layford freely executed his office and preached every Lords day, and yet maintained his wife & children foure or five, upon his industry there, with the blessing of God, and the plenty of the Land, without the helpe of his auditory, in an honest and laudable manner, till hee was wearied, and made to leave the Country." *New English Canaan* (p. 81); *see also Bradford* (p. 190). This took place early in 1625, but the Oldham and Lyford settlement was at Hull, not at Wessagusset, and lasted but little over a year; *note to Bradford* (p. 195).

Chicatabot, the greatest sagamore of the neighborhood, by whom it had been cleared of trees.[1] He, however, had abandoned it some eight years before, at the time of the great plague. Then, as now, that portion of the bay was very shallow, so that ships could not ride near the shore, nor boats approach it when the tide was out. There was, however, an abundance of beaver in the vicinity, and here Wollaston's party established itself. After a brief trial, however, Wollaston himself seems to have liked the prospect no better than Captain Gorges, for he departed for Virginia with a portion of his company, leaving the remainder behind in charge of a Mr. Rassdall, one of his partners. Presently he summoned Rassdall to follow him with yet others of the party, and one Mr. Fitcher was left in command of the remainder. Among these was Mr. Thomas Morton. This individual had a very well developed talent for mischief, which speedily found room for exercise at the expense of Lieutenant Fitcher, who was deposed from his command, expelled from the settlement and left to shift for himself with the aid of the neighboring settlers. Then Mount Wollaston became Merry Mount, with Thomas Morton for its presiding genius. According to all showing they seem to have been a drunken, dissolute set, trading with the savages for beaver-skins, holding very questionable relations with the Indian women, and generally leading a wild, reckless existence on the bleak and well-nigh uninhabited New England shore. Their house stood very near the present dwelling of Mr. John Q. Adams, and they scandalized the whole coast by erecting near it a May-pole, which Morton describes as having been some eighty feet in height, with a pair of buckhorns nailed to the top. Upon this pole the retired barrister seems to have been in the custom of fastening copies of verses of his own production, while he and

[1] Wood's New-England's Prospect; Young's Chron. of Mass., p. 395.

his companions conducted noisy revels about it. All this was bad enough and sufficiently well calculated to stir the gall of the severe elders of Plymouth. But the mischief did not stop here. The business of this precious company, in the intervals of merriment, was to trade; and in conducting their business they were by no means scrupulous. Liquor, fire-arms and ammunition were freely exchanged for furs, and the unsophisticated savage evinced a decided appreciation of the first and a dangerous aptitude in the use of the last. Thus the solitary settlers about Boston harbor soon found themselves in danger of their lives, as they espied armed Indians prowling about their habitations. The trade, however, was so profitable that Morton, regardless of consequences, was preparing to develop it on a larger scale when his neighbors met together and took counsel one with another. The Mount Wollaston settlement was, indeed, the first recorded instance of what in later Massachusetts history is technically known as "a liquor nuisance," and the neighbors determined that considerations of public safety required that it should be abated. Those were primitive times. They enjoyed few of the advantages of our more developed civilization, and while there were no ladies of the vicinage to wait upon the then lord of Merry Mount in a spirit of prayerful remonstrance, there was also no State constabulary before whom the "rumseller" trembled and fled. As the best substitute for these moral and legal agencies, and after fruitless efforts at reform through written admonishments which the carnal Morton received in a most unsatisfactory spirit of contumely, the men of the vicinage called upon the fathers of Plymouth.[1] These at once despatched the redoubtable Miles Standish to the scene of trouble, with directions to set matters to rights there once more, even as

[1] Bradford's Letter Book; I. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 3, p. 61.

he had done five years before in the days of Pecksuot. Weymouth was the scene of a portion of the succeeding operations, which were of a nature too delightfully humorous to be told in any language except that of the actors and of the time; besides the accounts furnish a very beautiful illustration of the discrepancies in authority which it becomes the painful duty of the historian to reconcile. And first, Thomas Morton shall tell his own story:

"They set upon my honest host [Morton] at a place, called Wessaguscus, where (by accident) they found him. The inhabitants there were in good hope, of the subvertion of the plantation at Mare Mount (which they principally aymed at); and the rather, because mine host was a man that indeavoured to advance the dignity of the Church of England; which they (on the contrary part) would laboure to vilifie; with uncivile terms: enveying against the sacred booke of common prayer, and mine host [Morton] that used it in a laudable manner amongst his family, as a practise of piety. . . . .

"In briefe, mine host [Morton] must indure to be their prisoner, untill they could contrive it so, that they might send him for England (as they said), there to suffer according to the merrit of the fact, which they intended to father upon him. . . . .

"Much rejoycing was made that they had gotten their cappitall enemy, ... The Conspirators sported themselves at my honest host [Morton], that meant them no hurt; and were so joccund that they feasted their bodies, and fell to tippeling, as if they had obtained a great prize; . . . . Mine host [Morton] fained greefe: and could not be perswaded either to eate, or drinke, because heē knew emptines would be a meanes to make him as watchfull as the Geese kept in the

Roman Cappitall: whereon the contrary part, the conspirators would be so drowsy that hee might have an opportunity to give them a slip, instead of a tester. Six persons of the conspiracy were set to watch him at Wessaguscus: But hee kept waking; and in the dead of night (one lying on the bed, for further suerty,) up gets mine Host [Morton] and got to the second dore that hee was to passe which (notwithstanding the lock) hee got open: and shut it after him with such violence, that it affrighted some of the conspirators.

"The word which was given with an alarme, was, ô he 's gon, he 's gon, what shall we doe, he 's gon? the rest (halfe a sleepe) start up in a maze, and like rames, ran theire heads one at another full butt in the darke.

"Their grand leader Captaine Shrimp [Standish] tooke on most furiously, and tore his clothes for anger, to see the empty nest, and their bird gone. The rest were eager to have torne theire haire from theire heads, but it was so short, that it would give them no hold: .... In the meane time mine Host [Morton] was got home to Ma-re Mount through the woods, eight miles, round about the head of the river Monatoquit, that parted the two Plantations: finding his way by the help of the lightening (for it thundered as he went terribly).....

"Now Captaine Shrimp [Standish] .... takes eight persons more to him, and they imbarque with preparation against Ma-re-Mount.... Now the nine Worthies are approached; and mine Host [Morton] prepared: having intelligence by a Salvage, that hastened in love from Wessaguscus to give him notice of their intent. .... The nine Worthies comming before the Denne of this supposed Monster, (this seaven headed hydra, as they termed him) and began like Don Quixote against the Windmill to beate a parly, and to offer

quarter (if mine Host [Morton] would yeald). . . . . Yet to save the effusion of so much worthy bloud, as would have issued out of the vaynes of these 9. worthies of New Canaan, if mine Host should have played upon them out at his port holes (for they came within danger like a flocke of wild geese, as if they had bin tayled one to another, as coults to be sold at a faire) mine Host [Morton] was content to yeelde upon quarter; and did capitulate with them: . . . . But mine Host [Morton] no sooner had set open the dore and issued out: but instantly Captaine Shrimpe [Standish], and the rest of the worties stepped to him, layd hold of his armes; and had him downe, and so eagerly was every man bent against him (not regarding any agreement made with such a carnall man) that they fell upon him, as if they would have eaten him: . . . .

"Captaine Shrimpe [Standish] and the rest of the nine worthies, made themselves (by this outragious riot) Masters of mine Hoste [Morton] of Ma-re Mount, and disposed of what hee had at his plantation."[1]

So much for Mr. Thomas Morton's account of this "outragious riot;" now let us see what Captain Standish had to say of the affair:

"So they resolved to take Morton by force. The which accordingly was done; but they found him to stand stifly in his defence, having made fast his dors, armed his consorts, set diverse dishes of powder & bullets ready on y^{e} table; and if they had not been over armed with drinke, more hurt might have been done. They somaned him to yeeld, but he kept his house, and they could gett nothing but scofes & scorns from him; but at length, fearing they would doe some violence to y^{e} house, he and some of his crue came out,

[1] New English Canaan, p. 93.

but not to yeeld, but to shoote; but they were so steeld with drinke as their peeces were too heavie for them; him selfe with a carbine (over charged & allmost halfe fild with powder & shote, as was after found) had thought to have shot Captaine Standish; but he stept to him, & put by his peece, & tooke him. Neither was ther any hurte done to any of either side, save y^{t} one was so drunke y^{t} he rane his own nose upon y^{e} pointe of a sword y^{t} one held before him as he entred y^{e} house; but he lost but a litle of his hott blood."[1]

Whichever of these widely divergent accounts is the more correct, upon one point they both concur, and that is, after all, the vital point, that Morton was arrested, carried to Plymouth and presently sent to England; while the Wollaston settlement was practically broken up, the liquor nuisance abated, and the trade in firearms and ammunition stopped. Peace and security were thus once more restored to Wessagusset, through the agency of Miles Standish. Nor were these blessings won at any unreasonable price, as the whole cost of the expedition was computed at £12 7*s*., of which sum £2 was assessed on the settlers at Wessagusset, and £2 10*s*. on the Plymouth colony.[2]

[1] Bradford, p. 241.

[2] This apportionment is derived from Governor Bradford's Letter-Book. See *I. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.* (v. 3, p. 63). In his History (p. 241) he speaks of "Weesagascusett" as being one of the plantations concerned, but the apportionment is made as "From Mr. Jeffrey and Mr. Burslem." These names have given the antiquarians a great deal of trouble, and they have generally assigned them to Cape Ann; *Savage's Winthrop* (v. 1, p. 44, n.); *Young's Chron. of Mass.* (p. 171, n.), or even to the Isle of Shoals; *Drake's Boston* (p. 50). They all confound William Jeffries of Weymouth with Thomas Jeffrey of Ipswich. Dr. Young does this in a most extraordinary manner, confusing them even while giving the correct name of one in his text, and of the other in the running title of the same page. *Chron. of Mass.* (p. 171). When Savage prepared his notes to Winthrop the MS. of Bradford had not been recovered, and he had not examined the New English Canaan carefully in reference to Weymouth. He seems to have been satisfied that the second settlement at Weymouth had been wholly broken up in 1624, *Notes to Winthrop* (pp. 43, 93), and sought to place

The destruction of the May-pole at Merry Mount took place in the early days of June, 1628, and just two years later Governor Winthrop arrived in Boston harbor and the consecutive annals of the Massachusetts Bay began. It is yet another two years, however, before we again meet with a mention of Weymouth, still under its Indian name. In August, 1632, Governor Winthrop, in company with the Rev. Mr. Wilson and other notables, took ship at Boston and landed at Wessagusset; and thence the succeeding day the distinguished party started on foot for Plymouth, completing their journey by night. Six days later, on the 31st of the same month, they returned; leaving Plymouth at five in the morning and reaching Wessagusset in the evening, where they passed the night, and finished their journey next morning by water.[1] We have Governor Winthrop's authority for the assertion that, both going and returning, they were here most hospitably feasted on the turkeys, geese and ducks of the neighborhood.[2] Two years later again Wessagusset was summoned by the General Court to assume charge of one of its pauper inhabitants, who had seen

Jeffries and Burslem elsewhere. There cannot be the slightest doubt that they lived at Wessagusset from before 1628. Both names are now extinct at Weymouth, though I find in the Records of the town a Jeffery in 1651 (see p. 70), and also a mention of one John Jeffers (Aug. 18, 1777), as a soldier who enlisted in Arnold's Canada campaign during the Revolution. Both were made freemen at early dates: — Burslem was a deputy from the town in 1636, and it was to Jeffries that Morton wrote as to his "good gossip," in 1634. It was to him and to Blackstone that John Gorges wrote in 1629, in regard to putting Oldham in possession of the Gorges grant. *Young's Chron. of Mass.* (pp. 51, 147, 169).

[1] Savage's Winthrop, v. 1, p. 192.

[2] In 1633 Wessagusset was thus described: "This as yet is but a small village; yet it is very pleasant, and healthful, very good ground, and is well timbered, and hath good store of hay-ground. It hath a very spacious harbour for shipping before the town, the salt water being navigable for boats and pinnaces two leagues. Here the inhabitants have good store of fish of all sorts, and swine, having acorns and clams at the time of year. Here is likewise an ale-wife river." *Wood's New-England's Prospect; Young's Chron. of Mass.* (p. 394).

fit to fall ill at Dorchester;[1] and in 1635 the Court established a commission to fix the boundary line between what are now Braintree and Weymouth,—then Mt. Wollaston and Wessagusset. Thus through eleven years, from 1624 to 1635, the early settlers of Weymouth only occasionally emerge from the oblivion of the past and are dimly shadowed on the mirror of New England history. But now, at last, in the year 1635, Wessagusset was by the order of the General Court made a plantation under the name of Weymouth, and the Rev. Mr. Hull, with twenty-one families from England, were allowed to establish themselves here.[2] Why the name of Weymouth was adopted I do not find recorded: it may well have been that the Rev. Mr. Hull and his party came from that place in the old country, but there does not appear to be any ground for asserting such to have been the fact.[3] With Mr. Hull, however, began the long succession of clergymen who ministered to the old first parish, of whom the present incumbent is the thirteenth. In the earlier days of New England the pastorates marked epochs in the history of the towns, much as do the reigns of kings and queens in European annals. Nor indeed were certain of the Weymouth pastorates brief in point of time, for two of them covered the long period of one entire century.

To return, however, to the political history of the town; in the same year (1635) in which it was created a plantation, Weymouth was also authorized to send a deputy to the General Court. The next year three deputies made their appearance instead of one; but, considering the size of the place they represented, the

[1] This man is mentioned as "late servant of John Burslyn." *Records of Mass.* (p. 121).

[2] Savage's Winthrop, v. 1, p. 163; Records of Mass., pp. 156–7.

[3] Proceedings of Mass. Hist. Soc., 1873, p. 396.

delegation with becoming modesty requested that two of their number might be dismissed, and accordingly Messrs. Bursley and Upham received leave to withdraw.[1] From that time forward, through a space of one hundred and thirty years, the political history of Weymouth moved uneventfully along, — a portion of that of the Province, — rendered noticeable only by some question of boundaries, by fines imposed because of the badness of highways or the insufficiency of the watch-house or carelessness in checking the roving propensities of swine, or by the division of a whale found stranded on its shore, or some other equally trifling incident of municipal government. The tax-collector made his annual visits, and his records seem to show that, as compared with others, the town during its earlier years was neither populous nor wealthy. Its proportion was in the neighborhood of one-fiftieth part of the whole amount levied on the colony, ranging from £4 to £10 each year; but in 1637 came the Pequod War, and during that year Weymouth was assessed for £27 in a total levy of £1,500. The town could not even then be said to rank high on the assessors' books, being thirteenth in a list of fourteen.

As respects population during the first half century of the existence of Weymouth, there is small material on which to form an estimate. In 1637 a levy of one hundred and sixty men was made to carry on the Pequod War; of these Weymouth furnished five as her contingent. Under the system of computation adopted by the highest authority,[2] this would indicate a total of about five hundred souls, which I am inclined to think was not far from the true number. During the next century and a quarter the increase was very slow, so

[1] Records of Mass., v. 1, p. 179.
[2] Palfrey, v. 2, p. 5.

that in 1776 the population but little exceeded 1,400;[1] indeed, it may be said that during the century and a half which succeeded the Pequod War the increase of the town in numbers scarcely exceeded one-half of one per cent. a year. To the Weymouth of to-day,—with its population of 10,000 souls,—1,400, and much less 500, seems a somewhat sparse settlement. It did not so impress the first inhabitants. On the contrary, in 1642 the townspeople of those days thought themselves so numerous as to render expedient the removal of a portion of their number to a new settlement. This was accordingly determined on, and the Rev. Mr. Newman, the clergyman of the time, to prevent all dispute, offered either to go or to remain as his parishioners should decide. A vote was taken, which resulted in favor of the removing party; with them, therefore, he cast in his lot at the place selected for their settlement, to which the pastor gave the name of Rehoboth, which it still bears. In later years other and larger migrations took place, first to Easton and subsequently to Abington, thus accounting for the slow movement of population in the mother town, which, indeed, between 1740 and 1780 rather tended to diminish than to increase. This condition of affairs, however, in no way disturbed the inhabitants. On the contrary, four years after the Rehoboth secession, the town records under the date of April 6, 1646, contain this singular entry, with the significant words "Stand Good," written against it in the margin:

[1] See the sketch of the town of Weymouth, written by Dr. Cotton Tufts, and printed in 1785 in *Topographical Descriptions of the Towns in the County of Suffolk, and of Charlestown in the County of Middlesex.* A manuscript copy of this sketch was very kindly placed at my disposal in the preparation of this address by J. J. Loud, Esq., of Weymouth, with other material for a history of Weymouth, which it is to be regretted Mr. Loud does not himself propose to prepare. A copy of the compilation of which Cotton Tufts' sketch was a part is in the library of the Massachusetts Historical Society, bound with other documents under the title of "*Gookin and Geography.*"

"Whereas we find by sad experience the great inconvenience that many times it comes to pass by the permitting of strangers to come into the plantation pretending only to sojourn for a season, but afterwards they have continued a while account themselves inhabitants with us, and so challeng to themselves all such priviledges and immunitys as others do enjoy, who notwithstanding are of little use to advance the public good, but rather many times are troublesome and prove a burden to the plantation, the premises considered, together with the straightness of the place, the number of the people, and the smallness of the trade we yet have amongst us, we the townsmen whose names are subscribed for the prevention of this and the like inconveniencys, have thought good to present to consideration the insuing order to be voted by the whole Towne to stande in force as long as they in wisdome shall see just cause.

"First that no inhabitant within this plantation shall presume to take into his house as an inmate, or servant, any person or persons, unless he shall give sufficient bonds, to defray the plantation of what damage may ensue thereuppon, or be as covenant servant, and that for one year at the least without leave first had and obtayned from the whole Towne at some of their public meetings, under the penalty of 5 shillings a week as long as hee shall continue in the breach of this order, to be levied by the constable or other officer, and delivered to the townsmen for the time being, to be improved for the use and benefit of the towne. Also it is further agreed upon by and with the consent of the whole towne that no person or persons within this plantation shall lett or sell any house, or land, to any person or persons that is not an inhabitant amongst us, untill he hath first made a tender of it to the Towne,

at a trayning or some lecture day or other public meeting."

And to show that this was not a mere empty threat, it is but necessary to turn to this other record of thirty-eight years later, April 30th, 1684:

"At a Meeting of the Selectmen they passed a warrant to the Constable John Pratt as followeth: —

"To the Constable of Weymouth

"You are hereby required in his Majestys name forthwith to distrain upon the Estate of Joseph Poole to the value of five shillings which is for the breach of town order for entertaining of Sarah Downing one week contrary to town order, and so from week to week as long as the said Joseph Poole shall entertaine the said Sarah Downing.

"Dated Aprill 30th 1684. Signed in the name and by the order of the Selectmen.

"SAMUEL WHITE."[1]

Not unnaturally, therefore, with continual migrations of its people taking place, and with the advent of new population sternly discouraged, the growth of Weymouth was slow. Nevertheless, grow it did, and it prospered. I have spoken of the long interval of one hundred and twenty-five years between 1640 and 1765, an interval which includes one-half of the entire history of the town, as a single period. As such it can best be treated, for with Weymouth, as with most other New England towns, it was the time of slow growth, the long period of infancy. It was marked by few events of importance. In 1676 the terror of King Philip's war swept over Weymouth, as it did over all

[1] See, also, a similar order of January 1, 1685.

the other outlying settlements of the colony. That was by far the most cruel ordeal through which Massachusetts has ever passed,—one, of the deep agony of which it is not easy for us, removed from it by two hundred years of time, to form even a dim conception. I shall not pause to dilate upon it here, though, in a far less degree it is true than many of her sister settlements, Weymouth then tasted the horrors of savage warfare. Women were slaughtered and houses were burned within her limits, and the losses she sustained were sufficiently severe to induce the General Court to allow the abatement of a portion of her tax. Again she was called upon to furnish her contingent of soldiers, who doubtless played their part manfully enough at the storming of Narragansett Fort.[2] Indeed, in every warlike ordeal through which Massachusetts has been called to pass,—from the first struggle of Miles Standish, in 1624, to the great rebellion, two hundred and forty years later,—the ancient town may fairly claim that she has contributed of her blood with no stinting hand.

But the war of King Philip was ended, and again Weymouth lapsed into the old, quiet, steady, uneventful life. During the next ninety years I doubt if anything more momentous occurred within her limits than the burning of the town meeting-house, in 1751. That, however, was a very remarkable year,—one still borne in painful recollection,—the saddest in the whole history of Weymouth. It has indeed left its mark on the records, where, under date of May 21st, 1752, in the town meeting that day held, it was —

"Voted to send no representative this present year on account of the great charge of building a Meeting-

[2] There were thirteen Weymouth men in Captain Johnson's company employed against the Indians in October, 1675. *Vinton Memorial* (p. 50, n.).

house, and the extraordinary Sickness that has prevailed in the town in the year past."

The meeting-house was burned on the 23d of April, and its destruction was impressed on the recollection of those living in the vicinity by a special circumstance. The fathers of the town had seen fit to utilize the loft over the church as a magazine, and in it was stored the supply of town powder to the very respectable amount of three barrels. Naturally, at the proper moment, this brought the conflagration to a crisis, making, as Parson Smith, the clergyman of the period, has recorded, "a surprising noise when it blew up." The event has also been celebrated in contemporaneous verse by Paul Torrey, the village Milton:

Our powder stock, kept under lock,
With flints and bullets were,
By dismal blast soon swiftly cast
Into the open air.

The poet also intimates grave suspicions as to the origin of the fire, and indeed hints at a personal knowledge of the incendiaries, suggesting very radical measures for their destruction and extirpation:

O range and search in every arch,
And cellar round about;
Search low and high, with hue and cry,
To find those rebels out.

I'm satisfy'd they do reside,
Some where within the Town;
Therefore no doubt, you'll find them out,
By searching up and down.

On trial them we will condemn,
The sentence we will give;
Them execute without dispute,
Not being fit to live.[1]

[1] Paul Torrey's curious efforts at versification were printed in 1811, in the appendix to a discourse of the Rev. Jacob Norton. The author tells us that they were designed "to preserve the memory of these remarkable things to future posterity."

History does not record any satisfactory result as attending the poet's search, but in the succeeding year he was tuning his lyre to sing the dedication of a new and more commodious edifice, erected in place of that which had been destroyed. But the other disaster which made memorable the year 1751 was far more terrible than the destruction of any building the work of human hands. That year was marked by a veritable slaughter of the innocents. Death stalked through the town. Between May, 1751, and May, 1752, a terrible throat distemper so raged among the children as to amount almost to a pestilence. In October, 1751, alone, thirty died, and in all there perished some one hundred and twenty. Out of a population of only twelve hundred, no less than one hundred and fifty persons died in the town during that twelvemonth.[1] During the succeeding year the disease gradually disappeared, and has since been almost unknown in Weymouth. Rarely, indeed, however, even in times of plague, has the death-rate exceeded that of Weymouth in 1751–2.

Broken here and there by such episodes as these, the life of the little settlement flowed on in the general even tenor of its way through the lives of four generations of its children. It was an existence which we now find it difficult to picture. Living as we do in the hurry and bustle of the modern world,— having the record of human life in both hemispheres daily spread before us,— moving with ease over two continents,— in the neighborhood of cities and libraries and galleries and theatres,— belonging to a civilization enriched with all the accumulated wealth of centuries,— accustomed ourselves to large affairs and dealing in millions where in the olden time they talked but of

[1] Sketch of Weymouth, by Dr. Cotton Tufts. The usual death-rate was sixteen a year.

thousands,— we, in the year 1874, can hardly stand here, and, looking around from King-Oak Hill, picture to ourselves the life led in its neighborhood a century and a half ago. To the intense lover of nature, it is true, Weymouth probably then bore a more attractive aspect than now it does, for nature had lavished its gifts upon it with no sparing hand. Eastward the green islands studded the bay, round which the sea sparkled with waters rarely vexed by the keel and never beaten by the paddle,— to the north the town of Boston was hidden from sight as it nestled at the feet of its hills,— to the west the Blue Hills loomed up in their soft, misty beauty even as they do to-day, they alone unchanged,— to the south stretched away the more level forest land in which the beautiful Weymouth ponds lay quietly imbedded in their native framework of virgin green, while around their shores the wolf still lurked and the swift deer bounded. No long rows of piles then broke the swift tide as it ebbed and flowed in the Fore River,— no tall chimneys belched out black smoke on the eastern limit of the town,— no phosphate factory at the foot of the Great Hill poisoned the sweet native atmosphere, but the waves rippled on the beach, and rose and fell amid the haunts of the seal and the sea-fowl, even as they did when Thomas Morton of Merry Mount thus described the land: "And when I had more seriously considered of the bewty of the place, with all her faire indowments, I did not thinke that in all the knowne world it could be paralel'd. For so many goodly groues of trees; dainty fine round rising hillucks: delicate faire large plaines, sweete cristall fountaines, and cleare running streames, that twine in fine meanders through the meads, making so sweete a murmering noise to heare, as would even lull the sences with delight a sleepe, so pleasantly doe they glide upon the pebble stones, jet-

ting most jocundly where they doe meete; and hand in hand runne downe to Neptunes Court, to pay the yearely tribute, which they owe to him as soveraigne Lord of all the springs."[1]

During the early days of the settlement the township was covered with a natural growth of timber, in which the oak, the elm, the chestnut, the ash, the pine and the cedar were mingled; and through many years the town records bear frequent trace of the jealous care with which the townsmen preserved this great source of beauty and of wealth.[2] As timber, however, became more valuable, the forests were encroached upon, until in the third quarter of the last century they had been well nigh destroyed. But, during the earlier years, as one stood on King-Oak Hill, the whole broad panorama must have appeared an almost unbroken wilderness of wooded hill and dale, and azure sea and verdant shore; while here and there, few and far between, could have been discerned the rude belfry of a colonial church; or the long, brown, sloping roof and hard angular front of some farmer's house, surrounded by barns and buildings more unsightly than itself, protruded its ugliness amidst the open fields upon which the cattle grazed or the ripening harvest waved. Weymouth was not settled, as were many other towns, with a view to village life, while outlying farms stretched away to the outskirts of the township, — here every free-holder seems to have dwelt upon his land. The church and the burying-ground were the natural centres of the olden town, but no village then

[1] New English Canaan, p. 41.

[2] Whoever shall presume to fell or kill or top any tree or trees (after publication hereof or notice given) which growes before his owne or his neighbours Dore, or that stands in any place upon the commons or highwayes which may be for the shaddow either of man or beast or shelter to any house or otherwise for any public use every person so offending shall be lyable to pay for every such tree so feld, topt, or kild 20s. to the Town's use." *Records, February 1st, 1867* (?).

or now has ever gathered about them. Even as late as 1780 there were but about some two hundred houses in all scattered over the whole surface of Weymouth, and these were of the plainest, simplest sort.[1]

The men and women who dwelt in them were in great degree cut off from the whole outer world; — at least we would think so now. The roads were few and bad; the chief one, still known as Queen Ann's turnpike, is said to have received its name, not from the sovereign of the loyal colonies, but from the hostess of a little "four corner" inn upon it, who was always known by that royal title.[2] Queen Ann's turnpike was the direct road between Boston and Plymouth, but the time of which I speak was long before the stage-coach era, and the Weymouth man, whom business called to Boston, went by water, or drove or walked there over Milton Hill and Roxbury Neck. Nor was that journey to Boston then devoid of danger. Early in the last century, for instance, it is traditionally stated that a party, including two of the principal citizens of Weymouth, while returning home by water from Boston, were overtaken by a snow-storm and wrecked on one of the islands in the bay; all perished, it is said, save Captain Alexander Nash and a negro servant, through whose devotion his life was saved.[3] If the tradition be true it should be added that Captain Nash's descendants in the present century have repaid the debt due to their ancestor's slave by long and eminent services in the emancipation of his race. But the story at least illustrates the distance then existing between Boston and Weymouth,[4]— a distance greater for every

[1] Sketch of Weymouth, by Dr. Cotton Tufts.

[2] This and some other facts I state on the authority of Mrs. Maria W. Chapman, of Weymouth, who very kindly furnished me with much local information which has not heretofore found its way into print.

[3] Mrs. Chapman's MS.; and see Savage's Winthrop, v. 1, p. 286.

[4] "The distance by land from Boston to the confines of the town is 14 miles." *Sketch by Dr. Cotton Tufts.*

practical purpose than that now existing between Weymouth and New York.

Between Old Spain and Quincy Point, or Wessagusset and Mount Wollaston as they then were called, a ferry was authorized as early as 1635, and the rate of ferriage was fixed at a penny for each person and at threepence for each horse; two years later this rate was raised and the ferryman of the day was licensed to keep a house of call. But so far as the whole great outer world was concerned, the earlier dwellers in Weymouth were, through four generations, what we should consider as entombed alive. There was no newspaper, — there was no system of public transportation, — there was no regular post, — between the colonies themselves there was little occasion for intercourse, and Europe was months removed. Those freemen who were elected deputies attended the sessions of the General Court; and now and then the clergyman or the magistrate took part in some solemn conclave of his brethren at the capital or in a neighboring town. Of the young men, a few went with the fishing fleet to Cape Sable, or sailed on trading voyages to the West Indies or to Spain, thus catching glimpses of the outer world; but it may well be questioned whether any Weymouth-born woman ever laid eyes on the shores of the mother country during the first hundred and sixty years of the settlement of the town.

The men and women of those five generations were a poor, hard-working, sombre race, — rising early and working late, — laboriously earning their bread by the sweat of their brows. There were no labor reformers then. The men worked in the fields, the women in the house: the first tended the flocks, or planted and gathered the harvest; — the last busied themselves in the dairy and the kitchen, or at the spinning-wheel and the wash-tub. It is a tradition of the daughter of Parson

Smith that with her own hands she scrubbed the floor of her bed-room the afternoon before her eldest son, John Quincy Adams, was born. There was no nonsense at least about that people; every one had work to do, and no one, gentle or simple, was above his work.

For years there was a single school in the town, and the teacher was annually engaged by a vote in the town-meeting.[1] Subsequently his teaching was divided, the north precinct receiving eight months of his time and the south four; but this arrangement not proving satisfactory, the money raised for support of schools was finally divided between the precincts in proportion to their tax, and they were left to apply it each in its own way. But for us it is most curious to see through all these years how small were the expenses of the town and how large a proportion of the annual tax was

[1] "At a Generall Town Meeting of the inhabitants of Weymouth the 24th of June, 1689."

"The Town past a vote that William Chard is to serve as Town Clerk."

"At a meeting of the Selectmen upon the first day of July 1689 Agreed with Mr. Chard to Ring the Bell & Sweep the Meeting-house to begin the 6th daye of July, and for the time that he performs that work he is to have after the rate of forty shillings a year in money or three pounds in town pay."

"At a Meeting of the freeholders of the town of Weymouth the 13th day of July 1694."

"The Towne past a vote they will have a publique School-master."

"At a meeting legally warned for the Inhabitants of the town of Weymouth upon the first of October 1694 to treat concerning a School-master, and it was voted that Mr. Chard should serve as School-master from the date abovesaid till the last of March next ensuing the date hereof, & provided Mr. Chard doe faithfully perform the office of School-master, that is to teach & instruct all children & youth belonging to the town in reading & writing & casting of accounts according to the capacitie of those that are sent to him, and according to his own abillitie: under this consideration the town have past a vote upon the aforesaid first of October that Mr. Chard shall have for his sallary for the half year above expressed six pounds in or as money to be levied upon the severall Inhabitants according to proportion by a town rate."

The next year (1695), William Chard was again engaged at five shillings a week, but in 1696 an arrangement was made with Mr. John Copp at £30 a year. The salary of the pastor at this time was "£108 16s. in goods alias money £68" (about $225).

applied to education. In the last century, before the War of Independence destroyed all measure of value, £120 ($420) of the old tenor, so called, was the average annual levy, and of this five-sixths went to the support of the schools. Expenditures on other accounts were necessarily very small. Until the year 1760 the highways were repaired by the labor of the people of the town, who, for this purpose appear to have been equally assessed. As, however, the disparity in wealth became greater and this burden heavier, the system was changed, and in 1760 every person paying a poll-tax was called on for a day's labor, which was assessed at 2*s.* 1*d.* (35 cents), and those who also paid property taxes were further called on for as many additional days' labor as 2*s.* 1*d.* were contained in the amount of their property tax.[1] The sparsely settled character of the town obviated all necessity of a fire department, though an entry in the records as early as 1651 gives a curious glimpse into the habits and dangers of a community before the blessed invention of lucifer matches. An order was then made by the selectmen, in consideration of "the great loss and damage that many & many a time doth fall out in this Towne by fire," and because "no effort has been made to restrayne the carringe abroad of fiery sticks . . . . in mens hands, which is exceeding dangerous especially when the wind is high," — in view of these facts the town fathers, under a penalty of twenty shillings for each offence, proceeded to forbid any one between March and November from transporting "any fire from one place to another than in a pot or other vessell fit for such a purpose and close covered."[2] Until the present century, however, this ordinance seems to have been regarded as sufficient protection against the dan-

[1] Records, 10th March, 1760; John Adams' Works, vol. 2, p. 118.
[2] Records, p. 56.

gers of conflagration, thus cutting off that heavy item of modern town expenses; while, so far as salaries were concerned, volumes are contained in the following clause with which the vote of 1651, defining the duties and powers of the selectmen, closed; — "Sixthly — Wee willingly grant they shall have their Dynners uppon the Towne's charge when they meet about the Towns affayres." [1]

The town government of those days was, indeed, the simplest government conceivable. There were the clergyman (for parish and town were one), the schoolmaster, the selectmen, the deputy, the constable and the pound-keeper. In the earliest days it was even simpler yet than this, for frequent meetings of the whole town were called. But even then it was speedily found that this led to abuses,[2] and, in 1651, a system of two regular town meetings in each year was adopted, and the powers of the selectmen were specifically defined.[3] The

[1] Records, 26th November, 1651.

[2] The "mutifariousness" of such meetings "occacions the neglect of appearance of many whereby things [are] many times carried on by a few in which many or all are concerned which often makes the legality of such proceedings to be questioned." It was therefore voted to thereafter have two regular town meetings in each year in March and November. *Records*, 1650, p. 56.

[3] "At a meeting of the Town the 26th of the 9th moth (November) 1651.

"The power that the Towne of Weymouth committeth into the hands of the Selectmen for this present year ensueing 1651.

"First. Wee give them power to make such orders as may be for the preservation of our intrests in lands & corne & grass & Wood & Timber, that none be transported out of the Towns Commons.

"Secondly. They shall have power to see that all orders made by the Generall Court shall be observed and also all such orders that are or shal be made which the Towne shall not repeale at their meetinge in the first month.

"Thirdly. It shal be lawful for them to take course that dry Cattle be hearded in the woods except calves & Yearlings & that they provide Bulls both for the Cowes & dry Cattle.

"Fourthly. They may issue out all such rates as the Towns occasions shall require & see that they be gathred, that a due account may be given of them.

"Fifthly. They may satisfy all graunts provided they satisfy them in due order, and not within two miles of the Meeting-house.

"Sixthly. Wee willingly grant they shall have their Dynners uppon the Towns charge when they meete about the Towns affayres." *Records.*

continuous record of these meetings through more than a century, at once reveals the slow, unconscious growth of a great political system, and supplies the amplest evidence of the sameness of a colonial village life. To the student in the science of government these volumes of the Weymouth town records are replete with interest. In them the growth of a system from the root up may be studied. As an observing man turns over the ill-spelt, almost illegible pages, they grow luminous in their bearing on many of the most distressing problems of the age. As Gibbon, from an experience among the yeoman militia of England, derived a certain comprehension of the legionaries of Rome, — so the early records of the New England towns make it most manifest to us why the horrors of 1793, and the later excesses of the Commune, are possible in France, and why nothing other than a republic is now possible in New England. In these records we see parliamentary institutions stripped of their non-essentials and reduced to first principles; — we see that the New England town-meeting democracy was the purest and simplest government of the people, for the people, which the world has yet produced. Here is a perfect equality, controlled by an almost iron law of usage. Year after year every question of common concernment is settled in general town-meeting by a vote of the majority, after a free and full discussion, conducted in perfect deference to a rude parliamentary law. The greater number rules, but the minority ever asserts its rights, which are always freely conceded. The protests of the *contra dicentes* make a part of the records; the final appeal is made to the courts of law; the idea of an ultimate resort to force is never even suggested, much less discussed. Thus, through our town records, we are made to realize that republican government is in New England a product of the soil and not an ex-

otic, — in France it is a graft; with us it is the stem. The growth of this germ from the town-meeting to the General Court, from the General Court to the Continental Congress, and from that to the Government of the United States, and thence back to the great cardinal fact of force, — all this is for others to trace. Meanwhile, here to-day, we stand on a record of two hundred and fifty years of pure democracy, — the deep, underlying tap-root of whatever is good in America. And indeed that record relates not to great things. It tells us of the daily life of our fathers. It deals not with theories, but with practical issues. The earlier generations did not realize that they were evolving a system, when they made regulations for the preservation of the town timber and the use of its common grounds; to check the roving propensities of its hogs, and to prescribe the liberty of the rams or the number of the parish bulls. Yet such was the fact, and the whole developed system of our National Government of to-day may be read in little in the Weymouth town records of over a century past. To-day's jealousy of the foreign producer is there evinced towards those inhabiting the neighboring towns, — they must not partake of the privileges of Weymouth. The protective system began with the beginning. In the earlier days bounties are offered for the ears of wolves, but later, as the wilderness is subdued, these are dropped from the record and the crow and the blackbird are proscribed in their place. Now and again we find the town entering on some system of encouragement to a new branch of industry, making a grant of land therefor;[1] but the

[1] March 7, 1698. "Voted that John Torrey, Tanner, for the encouragement of his trade shall have twelve pole of land joining to his fathers land out of the towns commons for a tanyard so long as there shall be use for it for that trade in this Town."

March 7, 1715. "At the said Meeting John Torrey, James Humphrey, Joseph Torrey, Ezra Whitmarsh, Enoch Lovell, Ebenezer Pratt & divers others their partners who had agreed to begin a fishing trade to Cape-sables,

herring fishery and the passage of the alewives into Great Pond have left, perhaps, the deepest mark on the town records. The annual passage of the fish up the Back River was an event in the life of Weymouth, exciting the liveliest interest in old and young. For this really great boon the town was indebted to Adam Cushing, one of its prominent citizens in the provincial times. Mr. Cushing died in the year of the great sickness, 1751, and seems to have been a truly remarkable man. About 1730 he bethought himself of bringing some herring, during the spawning season, over from Taunton River to the Great Pond. He did so, himself superintending the work of transportation, and seeing to it that fresh water was properly supplied to the fish. It would seem, therefore, that through him Weymouth may claim a place of one hundred and forty years' standing in the interesting history of pisciculture in Massachusetts.[1]

These records also reveal to us very clearly what a singularly conservative race our ancestors were, — in this respect how different from their children. They clung very close to authority, to tradition and to precedent. The conditions by which they were surrounded changed but slowly, and they themselves changed more slowly yet. What volumes, for instance, in this respect, are contained in this single fact: — in 1651 the town, in six brief articles, defined the powers of its

requested of the town that they might have that piece or parcel of land at the mouth of the fore river in the northerly part of Weymouth called and known by the name of Hnnts Hill and the low land and Beach adjoining thereunto, that is so much as they shall need for the management of said fishing trade. The Town after consideration thereof Voted that they should have the said land and Beach to manage their fishing trade."

March 13, 1727. "Voted at the aforesaid meeting whether the Town will give to Doctor White five acres of Land below Hill that was formerly granted to John Vinson provided the said Doctor White continues in the town of Weymouth and in practice of physick, & in case he shall remove out of town said White to purchase said land or to return it to the Town again. It passed in the affirmative."

[1] Mrs. Chapman's MS. And see Records, 1st March, 1731.

selectmen, and more than sixty years later, in 1712, I find the following entry in the records: "Voted the Selectmen the same power they had granted in the year 1651."[1] Again, to cite another example: Weymouth then, as now, had among its citizens a James Humphrey, and, under date of March 12th, 1781, I find this entry: "Voted — That the thanks of the Town be given to the Hon^ble James Humphrey Esq^r. for his faithful services as a selectman in the Town for more than forty years past." Unlike so many of her sister towns, the Weymouth of to-day has never, even yet, learned enough of the science of true republican government to "rotate" its town officials. When they have had a man who was willing to serve them well and faithfully, they have actually kept him in office. The James Humphrey of the last century served the town "over forty years"; the James Humphrey of this has already served it nearly twenty-five.

I do not know if it indeed was so, but to me the very nature of the New England world seems to have been less cheerful in those earlier days than now. Not only was life less joyous, but nature wore a harsher front. I have spoken of the great sickness of 1751, and how it desolated Weymouth; but epidemics seem to have been far more prevalent during the last century than in this. The fearful scourge of the small-pox has left its pit-marks on every page of early New England history, and when, in 1775, a chronic dysentery prevailed to such an extent that three, four and even five children were lost in single families, a Weymouth woman writing from the midst of the general distress could only say "the dread upon the minds of the people of catching the distemper is almost as great as if it were the small-pox."[2] Yet in 1735 the diphtheria raged, as well

[1] See Records, 3d March, 1712.

[2] Letters of Mrs. Adams (ed. 1848), p. xxxvi.

as in 1751. Their winters also seem to have been longer, their snows deeper, their frosts more severe than ours. In 1717 there was a great snow-storm, famous in New England annals. The country was buried under huge drifts, which swept over fences and houses, reducing the whole colony to one white, glittering desert. Weymouth disappeared with the rest, and the event was of sufficient importance to cause a memorandum of it to be inserted in the records.[1] In other years we hear of the harbor freezing over in November; and on the 26th of March, 1785, the winter's snow, though much reduced, lay still on a level with the fences, nor was it till April 7th that the ice broke up in the Fore River.[2] I doubt whether any man now living has witnessed a like occurrence.

A severer climate and harsher visitations seem strictly in keeping with the character of the people. The religious element which led to the settlement of New England still strongly asserted itself in the life and customs of the colony. Wealth had hardly yet begun to exercise its subtle influence upon it. Indeed, though almost all were prosperous there was little of what can properly be called wealth in the community, but there was equally little poverty. The people lived in rude abundance, and I do not believe that during the first hundred years of the history of Weymouth as many persons received public aid of the town. Certainly the method of dealing with pauperism, where it occasionally appears in the records, was primitive in the extreme, and scarcely commends itself to modern theories.[3] But as a rule there appears to have been a

[1] "An exceeding great snow on February 21st, 1717." *Records* (v. 1, p. 270). It is the single record of the kind.

[2] MS. memorandum of Dr. Cotton Tufts.

[3] The following record, for instance, is a little suggestive of what is now called "baby farming," though we know in that society it led to fewer abuses. At a town meeting in Weymouth, August 28, 1733, "Voted by the Town to give Twenty pounds to any person that will take two of the

strikingly equal division of such property as the people had, which lay almost wholly in their cattle and their lands; accumulation had scarcely begun.

We are always accustomed to regard the past as a better and purer time than the present, — there is a vague, traditional simplicity and innocence hanging about it almost Arcadian in character. I can find no ground on which to base this pleasant fancy. Taken altogether I do not believe that the morals of Weymouth or of her sister towns were on the average as good in the eighteenth century as in the nineteenth. The people were sterner and graver, — the law and the magistrate were more severe, but human nature was the same and would have vent. There was, I am inclined to think, more hypocrisy in those days than now, but I have seen nothing which has led me to believe that the women were more chaste, or that the men were more temperate, or that, in proportion to population, fewer or less degrading crimes were perpetrated. Certainly the earlier generations were as a race not so charitable as their descendants, and less of a spirit of kindly Christianity prevailed among them. But in those days enjoyment itself was almost a crime, and every pleasure was thought to be a lure of the devil and close upon the boundary line to guilt. Holidays, accordingly, were few and far between. The May-pole disappeared with the wild Morton of Merry Mount. During the colonial period, election or training day was what the Fourth of July is to us, — the great anni-

Children of the Widow Ruth Harvey (that is) the Eldest Daughter and one of the youngest Daughters (a twin) and take the care of them untill they be eighteen years old.

"Voted that the Selectmen shall take care of the other (twin) a youngest daughter of the widow Ruth Harvey, and put it out as reasonably as they can."

The following also has a strange sound to modern ears, from the Record of March 11th, 1771: "Voted to sell the Poor that are maintained by the town for this present year at a Vendue to the lowest bidder." *Records* (v. 1, pp. 318, 438).

versary of the year, on which the whole community came as near to unbending as it knew how. Thanksgiving and the annual fast were both church days; Guy Fawkes' day was notorious for its noisy revels; Sunday was devoted to nominal rest and veritable exhortation. On that day, every one not an infant attended church, and the infants were left alone at home.[1] From Saturday evening to Monday morning all labor ceased, — the voices of the children were hushed, — the blinds were drawn, and a quiet, which was not rest, pervaded the town. The lecture and the sermon were the events of the week, — they supplied the place of the theatre, the novel and the newspaper, — they were listened to and discussed and commented upon by old and young, — and, so far as my investigations have enabled me to judge, the stiffest of orthodoxy was ever preached from the Weymouth pulpit.

In the early days, however, the clergy of New England were an aristocracy, — almost a caste. Not, of course, an aristocracy of wealth, but of education, tradition and faith, — a veritable priesthood in fact. The tie between the pastor and his people partook almost of the nature of the wedding bond; there was a

[1] "There fell out (1642) a very sad accident at Weymouth. One Richard Sylvester, having three small children, he and his wife going to the assembly, upon the Lord's day, left their children at home. The eldest was without doors looking to some cattle; the middle-most, being a son about five years old, seeing his father's fowling piece, (being a very great one), stand in the chimney, took it and laid it upon a stool, as he had seen his father do, and pulled up the cock, (the spring being weak), and put down the hammer, then went to the other end and blowed in the mouth of the piece, as he had seen his father also do, and with that stirring the piece, being charged, it went off, and shot the child into its mouth and through his head. When the father came home he found his child lie dead, and could not have imagined how he should have been so killed, but the youngest child, (being but three years old, and could scarce speak), showed him the whole manner of it." *Savage's Winthrop*, (v. 2, p. 77).

Weymouth, June 1, 1775. "Voted that the Soldiers from the age of Sixteen to Sixty appear with their arms upon Lords Days on penalty of forfeiting a Dollar each Lords Day for their neglect. That those Soldiers who tarry at home upon the Lords day, Except they can make a Reasonable Excuse therefor Shall forfeit two Dollars." *Records.*

sanctity about it; it was well-nigh indissoluble. But in its earliest period Weymouth was not fortunate in these relations. Prior to 1635 the plantation was too poor and too small in numbers to maintain a church, but that year one was gathered, being the eleventh of the colony.[1] Of Mr. Hull, the first authentic pastor, it can only be said that he preached in Weymouth for several years, and then his connection with the church was dissolved. There seems indeed at this time to have been a serious schism in the infant settlement, for, while Mr. Hull arrived in 1635 and preached his farewell sermon in May, 1639, yet as early as January, 1638, the elders of Boston had come to Weymouth, and had there demonstrated the efficacy of prayer by effecting a reconciliation between one Mr. Jenner and his people. The reconciliation seems to have been but temporary, for, after representing the town as deputy in the General Court in 1640, in 1641 Mr. Jenner removed to Saco. Meanwhile, in 1637, the Rev. Mr. Lenthall also appears upon the Weymouth stage, bringing with him the pestilential doctrines of Mrs. Hutchinson in regard to justification before faith and other equally incomprehensible theses, which came so near working the destruction of the infant colony. A movement was started inviting Mr. Lenthall to settle and organize a new church. It was apparently making rapid headway when the magistrates of the colony energetically interfered to put a stop to it. In March, 1638, Mr. Lenthall accordingly, with some of his leading supporters, was summoned to appear before the General Court, and made to see good reason why, with expressions of deep contrition, he should make a retraction of his heresies in writing and in open court. Upon this, he was, with some opposition, dismissed

[1] Savage's Winthrop, v. 1, p. 94, n. See Johnson's Wonder Working Providence, chap. 10.

without a fine, but only on condition that he was to make a similar public recantation in Weymouth, and should also be on hand when the next General Court assembled. His followers did not escape so easily; one of them was heavily fined, another was disfranchised, a third, having no means wherewith to pay a fine, was publicly whipped, and a fourth, "because of his novel disposition," received a significant intimation to the effect that the General Court "were weary of him, unless he reform." Shortly after this miscarriage, features in which are unpleasantly suggestive of inquisitorial proceedings in other lands, the Rev. Mr. Lenthall seems to have left Weymouth, for he is next heard of in Rhode Island, that blessed asylum for the persecuted of Massachusetts.[1]

Mr. Lenthall, however, represented only a schism in the Weymouth church; Mr. Jenner was the minister in the line of true succession. He retired to Maine in 1640 and was succeeded in his pastorate by Mr. Newman, who at last brought with him peace to the distracted church. He must have been a very superior man, — able, learned and faithful. Educated at Oxford, he had preached many years in England before coming to this country in 1638. He then spent some time in Dorchester, and was subsequently invited to Weymouth, where he settled and remained until he migrated with the larger portion of his people to Rehoboth. He is the real author of the Concordance to the Bible which goes under Cruden's name; for it was he who prepared the basis of the work, which was subsequently finished and published at Cambridge.[2]

[1] Savage's Winthrop, v. 1, p. 287.

[2] The best account of Mr. Newman and his Concordance is found in *Bliss' History of Rehoboth.* It is a singular fact that William Blackstone should have gone from Boston to Rehoboth, and been followed there by an emigration from Wessagusset, which place he had probably abandoned when he went to Boston.

The Weymouth church had now had three preachers in nine years, but the day of short pastorates was over. The Rev. Thomas Thacher was ordained as the successor of Mr. Newman in 1644, and there remained, beloved and respected of his people, for twenty years. Then marrying a second time, and his parish being unable to afford him a sufficient maintenance,[1] he moved to Boston, the home of his wife, and in him Weymouth lost at once its spiritual and its medical adviser, for Mr. Thacher was a skillful physician as well as a learned divine. Subsequently, in 1669, he became the first pastor of the Old South Church, in Boston, in which position he died, in 1678, leaving behind him a race of descendants whose names are familiar through a century of colonial annals.

To Mr. Thacher's pastorate of twenty years succeeded the fifty-one years of the learned and exemplary Samuel Torrey, the trusted adviser of the magistrates of his day, the intimate friend of all its leading divines, thrice invited to preach the election sermon, twice called to the presidency of Harvard College. Mr. Torrey enjoyed a very remarkable gift of prayer, so that it is told of him that upon the occasion of a public fast, in 1696, after all the other exercises, he prayed for two hours, and that so acceptably that his auditors, when towards the close he hinted at some new and agreeable fields of thought, could not help wishing him to enlarge upon them.[2] He died deeply lamented, at the age of seventy-six, in the year 1707.

Peter Thacher succeeded Mr. Torrey in the year of the latter's death, and continued in his ministry eleven years; being followed, in 1719, by Thomas Paine, whose connection with the church continued until dissolved, at his own request, in 1734. He then retired to Bos-

[1] II. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 7, p. 11.
[2] Eliot's Biographical Dictionary.

ton, where he ended his life, and his body was brought back to Weymouth for burial beside his children. He was the father and the grandfather of those Robert Treat Paines, the line of which is continued to the present day.

In 1734 the Rev. William Smith was settled as the eighth successive pastor of the first church, and so continued for forty-nine years, and until after the close of the colonial period. Mr. Smith was beloved and respected through his long ministry by his people, but to posterity he is chiefly known as the father of her who proved to be the most famous child of Weymouth. The familiar anecdote of Parson Smith's sermons on the marriages of his two daughters does not need to be repeated here.[1] Whether the good old pastor did or did not prepare the wedding discourse for Abigail's benefit from so very unsavory a text as that "John came neither eating nor drinking, and men say he hath a devil," we cannot now tell; the anecdote rests on tradition alone. Let us hope, however, that he did, for he lived to see his daughter's choice justified in the eyes of the most doubting of his parishioners; though he had himself already been thirteen years in his grave when, on the 8th of February, 1797, that daughter wrote to her husband in these solemn words, breathing the full spirit of the dead divine: "You have this day to declare yourself head of a nation. 'And now, O Lord, my God, thou hast made thy servant ruler over the people. Give unto him an understanding heart, that he may know how to go out and come in before this great people; that he may discern between good and bad. For who is able to judge this thy so great a people?' . . . . My thoughts and my meditation are with you, though personally absent; and my petitions

[1] It can be found in the preface (pp. xxviii, xxix), of the letters of Mrs. Adams (ed. 1848).

to Heaven are, that 'the things which make for peace may not be hidden from your eyes.'" [1]

But it is necessary to go back to the year 1765, when the long, monotonous quiet of over a century was to be broken for Weymouth and all her sister towns by the deep though distant mutterings of an impending war. The first notes of the struggle then break sharply in on the peaceful sameness of the town records like the blast of a trumpet. The Stamp Act had been passed, and the August riots had taken place in Boston. Mr. Oliver had been forced to resign his office, and the house of the Lieutenant-Governor had been sacked. The odious act was to take effect on the 1st of November, and a special session of the General Court had been called to take into consideration the course it was incumbent on the colony to pursue. The representative of Weymouth in those days was James Humphrey, Esq. Under these circumstances a meeting of the freemen was held on the 16th of October, at which Dr. Cotton Tufts was chosen Moderator, and a ringing address of instructions to Master Humphrey, as he was called, was voted and entered at length upon the records. The spirit of the ancient town was up, and its voice emitted no uncertain sound. Cotton Tufts was at that time thirty-four years of age. He was fully imbued with the patriotic spirit of the day, and was, in his own vicinage, a leading man. It is to his pen that the papers now entered on the town records are in all probability to be credited.[2]

Presently the government of the mother country somewhat receded from its position, and, during the loyal reaction which ensued, a draft of a measure indemnifying the sufferers in the August riots was sub-

[1] Letters of Mrs. Adams (ed. 1848), p. 374.

[2] That part of the town records which relates to the revolutionary period will probably be printed in full in the History of Weymouth, now in course of preparation.

mitted to the General Court. A special town meeting was held on September 1, 1766, and the town refused to give its assent to the payment of damages out of the public treasury. But another meeting was held on the 1st of December, when written instructions were entered at length on the records, again embodying the full rebel spirit of the day, but this time, and under strict conditions, authorizing Master Humphrey to vote for the proposed compensation.

In 1768 came the news that the British regiments were ordered to Boston. A committee of the Boston town meeting, called in consequence of this announcement, waited on Governor Bernard with a request, among other things, that the General Court should be convened. Meeting with a refusal, the Boston people took the matter into their own hands, and instructed their selectmen to invite, by circular letter, all the towns in the colony to send representatives to assemble in convention, at Boston, on the 22d of September. Over one hundred towns complied with this bold invitation, thus overriding the royal governor, and convening an assembly which, though it sat but four days, and carefully avoided any claim to a legal existence, was, in everything but in name, a house of representatives. In this convention sat James Humphrey, under instructions to be there from the town of Weymouth.

More than five years now passed away during which the controversy between the mother country and the colonies was continually approaching a crisis, but they left no mark on the records of Weymouth. Then arose the question as to the tax on tea. Early in December, 1773, the famous town meeting had been held in Faneuil Hall, at which the resolve was passed, " that if any person or persons shall hereafter import tea from Great Britain, or if any master or masters of any vessel or vessels in Great Britain shall take the same on board

to be transported to this place, until the unrighteous act shall be repealed, he, or they, shall be deemed by this body an enemy to his country, and we will prevent the landing and sale of the same, and the payment of any duty thereon, and will effect the return thereof to the place from whence it shall come." [1] Copies of this resolve were sent to all the sea-port towns in the Province. A few days later, on the night of December 16th, the celebrated tea-party took place in the Old South Church and on the wharves of Boston. In response to the resolve a special town meeting was held in Weymouth on Monday, January 3d, 1774, at which it was resolved by a very large majority, after some debate, that the inhabitants of the town would neither purchase nor make use of any teas, excepting such as they might happen then to have on hand, until Parliament repealed the odious duty upon it. On the 28th of September the town again met and chose a representative to the General Court, which convened at Salem on the 5th of October; no other instructions were given to him than those adopted by Boston for its own representatives, copies of which had been freely circulated.

A committee had been appointed at a town meeting held in July to procure signatures to the Joseph Warren "Solemn League and Covenant," which had been sent forth by the Boston committee of correspondence on the 5th of June. This measure was subsequently adopted by the Congress then sitting at Philadelphia, and recommended under the name of a Continental Association. So, on the 23d of December, 1774, at the close of the evening lecture, the roll of the inhabitants of Weymouth was called, and each man voted yea or nay on the question of the approval of the association. The two precincts voted separately; in each one hun-

[1] Hutchinson, v. 3, p. 432.

dred and twenty-three names were called, beginning with the two clergymen; in the first precinct, one hundred and thirteen answered to their names, of whom one hundred and nine voted "yea"; in the second precinct, out of one hundred and three voting, not one responded "nay." On the 30th of January the town again met and voted "To bare the constables of 1773 harmless in not carrying their money to Haryson Gray," he being the royalist treasurer of the Province; and further directed that the funds on hand should be turned over to the town treasurer. On the 9th of March this vote was reconsidered, and the money was directed to be paid to Henry Gardner of Stow, who now represented the patriot exchequer. At this meeting, too, the question was agitated of raising a company of minute-men, but the motion to that effect was not then carried. On the 27th of the same month, however, another town meeting was held and the action of the previous meeting was reconsidered, the town voting to raise a company of fifty-three men, who were to receive one shilling a week each for four weeks, and were to be drilled two half days a week. Upon the 2d of May another town meeting was held, and upon the 9th yet another. The affairs at Lexington and Concord had now taken place, and the greatest anxiety prevailed through all the towns in the vicinity of Boston. They were ever looking for similar enterprises. So at the first of these two meetings provision was made for a military guard of fifteen men, and at the second a committee of correspondence was organized, at the head of which were placed Dr. Tufts and Colonel Lovell. Twelve days later, early on Sunday, the 21st of May, the news was brought to the town that three sloops and a cutter had, during the previous night, come down from Boston and had anchored at the mouth of the Fore River. A landing was momentarily expected, and it

was even reported to have taken place, and that three hundred soldiers were advancing on the town. Three alarm guns were fired, the bells were rung and the drums beat to arms. The panic and confusion were very great and worth recording, for it is the only time in the long history of the town that Weymouth has ever had cause to fear that a civilized and disciplined foe was at her threshold. Every house below the present North Weymouth station was deserted by the women and children. Mr. Smith's family fled from the old parsonage, and Dr. Tufts' wife being ill at the time, had a bed thrown into a cart, and, putting herself upon it, was driven to Bridgewater as a place of security; and, indeed, tradition says that other ladies of Weymouth gave evidence that morning of an abundant vitality, and displayed truly remarkable powers of locomotion. Meanwhile Dr. Tufts himself was busy serving out rations and supplying ammunition to the minute-men, who poured rapidly in from Hingham and Randolph and Braintree and all the neighboring towns, until nearly 2,000 of them were on the ground. Then it was discovered that the enemy were only foraging, and were engaged in removing hay from Grape Island. By the time they had secured about three tons, the minute-men had brought a sloop and lighter round from Hingham on which they put out for the island, whereupon the enemy decamped.[1] It was a mere alarm in which no one was hurt, but it showed the spirit of the town even though it only resulted in the destruction of the hay, which doubtless Gen. Ward's army needed, and which, had they been older soldiers, the minute-men would have brought away instead of burning.

Towards the middle of July again, a small party, among whom was Captain Goold of the Weymouth company, with twenty-five of his men, went out from

[1] Letters of Mrs. Adams, pp. 26, 33.

the Moon Head and burned a house and a barn full of hay on Long Island. On this occasion they had a sharp skirmish, for the British men-of-war lying in the harbor sent out their cutters to intercept the party. They all, however, got back safely except one man of the covering force on Moon Head, who was killed by a cannon-ball. That night a sloop of war dropped down to the Fore River, but attempted nothing beyond creating another alarm. And this experience from time to time was repeated, until at last, in the spring of 1775, Boston was evacuated; and upon the 14th of June following, in consequence of military movements on the islands in the harbor, the last remnant of the British fleet put to sea, and the towns bordering on the bay were thereafter allowed to rest in peace.

During the year 1775 ten town meetings had been held in Weymouth, and seven were held in 1776. And now we enter on a new phase of the struggle for independence. For us, with our recollections of the war of the rebellion still fresh in our memories, it is most curious to read these ancient records, — to observe how closely history repeats itself. We well remember the fierce, self-sacrificing patriotism of 1861, — how the country was all alive with eagerness, how money was poured forth like water, and how regiments enlisted faster than they could be put into the field. We remember how this lasted through a short six months, and how we then began to realize what war meant. Then bounties began to be paid, — then enlistments grew more difficult just in proportion as the call for men became more pressing, — then values were unsettled, prices rose, the feverish glow of excitement faded away, and stern-visaged war gradually assumed her whole hateful front. We generally, too, are apt to imagine that the earlier days were less selfish, more self-sacrificing, more harmonious than our own. The

records tell a different story. The declaration of Independence had only just been ventured upon, — it was not yet entered upon the records of Weymouth, "there to remain as a perpetual memorial," — when on the 15th of July, 1776, a town meeting was held to secure the enlistment of ten men for the continental army, that being the quota of the town. It was voted to raise £130, in order to give each recruit a town bounty of £13 in addition to the state bounty of £7, — making a bounty of £20 to each man. It was also voted to allow the citizens of Weymouth two days in which to enlist, after which a committee of two was to go forth in search of recruits elsewhere. But before the 22d of the month eight men more were called for, and so at its adjourned meeting the town had to increase its appropriation to £234, a portion of which sum was borrowed of Captain James White for one year, — being the earliest record of a Weymouth town debt.[1]

[1] The history of this loan is curious and suggestive. It may be traced through the following entries in the town records.

July 22, 1776. "Voted that the Town Treasurer Borrow the afforesaid sum of £234 & give the Towns security with Interest for the Same."

"July 23d 1776 the Town Treasurer Borrowed of Capt James White £130 and gave the Towns Security to pay the same in twelve months with interest."

April 7, 1783. "Voted to allow unto Captain James White the Depreation on some money that he lent to the Town.

"Whereas in the year 1776 Capt. James White lent the Town £130 and took it in again in 1778, and Took only the nominal Sum, — the Town Voted that Capt. White should have the Depreation that was on money when Capt. White's money was in the hands of the Town. Said Term of Time will be made to appear by a Receipt from Capt. Whitman.

"Voted that any others that are under like Circumstances with Capt. White, that have Lent Money to the Town and have Taken it in again, that they be allowed the Depreation that was on money while theres was in the Hands of the Town.

"Nathl Bayley Esq. Honle James Humphrey Esq. & Col. Asa White were Chosen a Committee for the above purpose of Settleing the Depreation with Capt. James White and others."

May 13, 1783. "A motion was made and Seconded to Reconsider a Vote that was past at a town meeting on April the 7th with regard to making up the Depreceation to Capt. James White and othors that lent money to the town and recd it again in the Nominal Sum and it passed in favour of Reconsidering of Said Vote."

To the Weymouth of that day these eighteen men were the equivalent of about one hundred and thirty now; and they were raised to take part in the unfortu-

September 16, 1783. "A Town Meeting in Consequence of Capt. James White's Commencing an action on the Town.

"A motion was made and Seconded to no if it was the minds of the People to stand Capt. White in the Law and it passed in favor of it.

"Voted to Chuse Two agents to act in Behalf of the Town against Capt. James White, even to final Judgment and Execution.

"The Hone Cotton Tufts Esq & Solomon Lovell Esq ware Chosen (Ajents Committee) for the above purpose.

"Voted that the ajents be impowered to Draw Money out of the Town Treasury to Defend the Town against Capt. White even to final Judgment and Execution they to Render an accompt how they disposed of the money.

"Voted to adjourn the meeting to the 22nd of this instant Sepbr at of the Clock in the afternoon."

"Sepbr 22d 1783. Meet at the adjournment, and as neither of the ajents had Taken the advice of a Lawyer Voted to adjourn to monday 29th of this instant September at 10 of the Clock foornoon."

"Sepbr 29th 1783 meet on the adjournment and further adjourned to October 6th 1783."

"October 6th 1783, meet on the adjournment. Voted that the ajents (if occation for it) appeal to the Superior Court at february Next. the Meeting Dissolved."

"Weymouth March the 8th 1784.

"the Agents appointed to defend the Town in an action brought by Capt. James White, on a Note paid him in Paper money; found that the Town was not in a Capacity to tender the money for the Note of Hand due — and therefore that the Costs and Charges of Court would fall upon the Town, whether the Demand for Depreciation on Said note paid was finally Decided in his Favour or not, — they also found that a much heaver Expence to the Town would arise from Carrying on the Suit to final Judgment than they Concieved that the Town was aware off — this induced your Agents to Listen to Some Proposals made by Capt White: (Viz) To Pay the Cost that had then arisen, to allow him Compound Interest on his Note that was due and to Estimate the Depreciation thereon from the month of June his note being Dated the first of July. He alledging that notwithstanding as their was but one Day that made the Difference; it was hard that the whole month of July should be taken in for the Estimate — they accordingly made the Calculation and Certified the same to the Town Treasurer, who Settled with Capt. James White Conformably thereunto, and the Action was dropt never having had a Tryall. As youre Agents conducted in this matter, as they Apprehended for the best Interest of the Town they flatter themselves that their Conduct will meet with the Approbation of the Town, and that the Town will Confirm the Doeings of their Treasurer thereon.

The Honble Cotton Tufts Esqr
Gen. Solomon Lovell Esqr } *Agents.*

"The Above Report Accepted by the Town.

John Tirrel *Town Clerk*"

The depreciation in paper money between July, 1776, and the same month in 1778, had been from par to 6.30 to 1.

nate Canada campaign under Arnold and Montgomery. How many of them ever returned we cannot tell, but the weary sons of Weymouth in 1776 doubtless found final resting-places in the wilds of Maine or beneath the snows of Canada, as more recently they found them in the swamps of the Chickahominy or beneath the torrid sun of Louisiana. By December of that year twenty-two more men went into the continental service, under Lieutenant Kingman; and now the bounty was three pounds per month for three months.[1] It was shortly before this time that a Weymouth-born woman, writing from the next town of Braintree, thus described the aspect of affairs: "I am sorry to see a spirit so venal prevailing everywhere. When our men were drawn out for Canada a very large bounty was given them; and now another call is made upon us, no one will go without a large bounty, though only for two months, and each town seems to think its honor engaged outbidding the others. The province pay is forty shillings. In addition to that this town voted to make it up six pounds. They then draw out the persons most unlikely to go, and they are obliged to give three pounds to hire a man. Some pay the whole fine, ten pounds. Forty men are now drafted from this town. More than one-half, from sixteen to fifty, are now in the service. This method of conducting will create a general uneasiness in the Continental army. I hardly think you can be sensible how much we are thinned in this province."[2]

And now a new difficulty, with which our generation has been sadly familiar, was added to the heavy load under which the unfledged nationality was compelled to stagger. The value of its paper currency had hitherto been sustained; but at last, in the face of ever-

[1] *Records*, Monday, December 23, 1776.
[2] Letters of Mrs. Adams (ed. 1848), p. 82.

increasing new issues, it began to depreciate, and by the close of the year 1776 it had fallen one-sixth in value. In vain does Congress enact that whoever pays or receives the currency at a rate less than its nominal value shall not only be accounted a public enemy, but shall forfeit the amount involved in such unpatriotic transaction. In defiance of law prices steadily rise. In January, 1777, the Legislature of Massachusetts went even further, and passed a measure entitled "An Act to prevent Monopoly and Oppression." Under this the selectmen of Weymouth, aided by a committee of their townsmen, proceeded to fix a tariff of prices at which articles were to be sold. It is a sad record. The effort was, of course, a futile one, but it was made; and there it stands "as a perpetual memorial," beginning with Indian corn and ending with cedar-posts, a monument of the wretched expedients to which sensible men will resort in troublous and unsettled times.

The call was now for three-year men, and the town bounty was eight pounds per annum. But some of the enlisted men had deserted, under the discouragement of the Long Island reverses, and none the less they claimed their bounties. The action of the town meeting seems to have been hardly consistent with the usually received ideas of military discipline, for it was voted to pay "those who deserted and came home before their times were up" four pounds apiece, on the report of a committee, to which the town added a further sum of forty shillings. But the whole story is told in the following extract from the record of May 21st, 1777: "Voted that Col. Solomon Lovell, Lieut. E. Cushing & Dea^{n} Samuel Blancher be a Committee to go out of Town to Hire men for the Contenential army for the Term of three years, — and that they be directed to git them as Cheep as they can, — and that noe one of them be allowed to give more than Thirty

pounds for a man without the advise of another of the committee."

Throughout the long war the people would not consent to a draft. They resorted to every expedient and makeshift, but they could not bring themselves to the one single expedient by which only can war be made decisive. In September, 1777, a draft was suggested,[1] but the idea met with no favor: again recourse was had to bounties, which were now £100 in lawful money, or forty shillings a month in produce at prices which ruled before the war.

The year 1779 must, however, have been much the gloomiest year of all to Weymouth, for it was in this year that the State of Massachusetts undertook the unfortunate Penobscot expedition. The land forces were commanded by the brave and popular Solomon Lovell, and naturally must have numbered in their ranks many Weymouth men. It encountered only disaster and loss, and added heavily to the already grievous burdens of the war. The commander of the naval contingent was court-martialled, but no question was made as to General Lovell's conduct. Meanwhile prices were rising, and now $4,500 was voted, wherewith to raise nine men. It had also become very evident that the tariff of prices fixed by the selectmen and the committee of the town, two years and a half before, was somewhat out of date, as, its provisions to the contrary notwithstanding, butcher's meat was now a dollar a pound, corn twenty-five dollars per bushel and labor

[1] The nearest approach made to a draft is found in the following vote: —

"June 19th. 1780

"Voted that the assessors be desired to set off the Inhabitants as near as they can into twenty Parsols or Districts as they Stand in the Tax Bill for Polls and Estates and each District to be obliged to get a Man to go into the Servis and if any one in said district shall refuse to go or to pay his Proportion according to what he pays Taxes the Capt. of the Company to which he belongs be Desired to draft said Person and return him as a Drafted Man." *Record.*

eight dollars per day. Still the good people were not discouraged, but a new committee was set to work, and again, by a large majority, a tariff of prices was established; but at the same town meeting which adopted it $9,000 was voted to procure recruits. Indeed, the figures now become colossal, and in September, 1780, the town votes £5,000 for the support of schools and £15,000 "to pay the three months men, if wanted for that purpose, if not, for other town charges." Nor was this all. The new State government was now organized, and John Hancock had been elected Governor, receiving, in Weymouth, twenty-nine votes to eleven for James Bowdoin; but one of the first acts of the Legislature was to allot among the various towns a quota of beef to be supplied as well as men, so the year 1780 closes with these two melancholy entries in the records of this poor little town, casting forty votes at the annual election: —

"*Voted* to raise one hundred and thirty thousand dollars of the old currency to procure the beef set on the town by the General Court."

"*Voted* to give fifty hard dollars a year for any one or more men that shall engage for this town for three year in the Continental Servis."

"Gen. Lovell, Cap^{t} Nash, Capt. Whitman & Lt Vinson chosen a Com^{ee} to hire the Nineteen men set on this town."

Of course the Continental currency was now almost wholly discredited, having fallen to seventy-five for one, and Weymouth instructed its representative to use his influence "that the act called the Tender Act should be repealed." But its repeal was of little consequence; the country had gotten back to hard money by the radical course of rendering all other money worthless. In

1781 Weymouth had also returned to the old tax figures, raising £60 for the support of schools and £160 for all other expenses; but the burden of recruiting grew heavier and heavier, and in October, 1781, it was "Voted to give the committee for hiring soldiers discretionary power to hire them upon the best terms they can," and $2,500, "hard dollars," were appropriated for the purpose.

Fortunately the long trial now drew near its close. The towns of Massachusetts were thoroughly exhausted and neither men nor money could be procured. In spite of the large sums offered, recruits were no longer forthcoming, and finally Weymouth as one of many delinquent towns, became liable to a heavy fine. The wonder, however, was not that the towns were delinquent, but rather where they found so many able-bodied men as they then supplied. Weymouth, at that time, could not well have mustered over two hundred men of the age of military service. The record would seem to establish the fact that more than one-tenth of these were annually called for. Such a strain could not long have been sustained; but the dogged tenacity of the people was equal to the burden they were called upon to bear, and it is pleasant to find, almost before the struggle was over, the process of recuperation begun, and the town on the 20th of November, 1782, voting £300 for the purpose of partly paying its debts.

With the close of the long struggle for independence ends the second period in the history of Weymouth. More than ninety years have since passed away, carrying with them three generations of the children of the soil. They have been years of great development and of healthy growth, — not such development nor such growth as is often seen in this country, — nothing, in-

deed, which in our age may be called remarkable, for almost any active and bustling railroad centre in the Western States can boast of greater census figures; but the growth of Weymouth has been that of a thrifty, industrious New England town, and when, after the long lapse of ages, the final account is rendered, who shall say that the former growth will be found better than the latter?

In 1782 Weymouth was still an agricultural community, — its people were scattered over its wide territory and it scarcely contained within its limits any cluster of houses worthy of the name of village. In the state election of that year fifty-one votes were cast, and the sum raised by taxation to defray the annual expenses of the town was the equivalent of $1,230. It contains now four separate villages within its limits, each one far more populous and more wealthy than the entire town then was; its annual levy exceeds $85,000, and at its elections it casts 1,200 votes.

It is now fifty years since the learned editor of Governor Winthrop's History of New England remarked that "a careful history of Weymouth is much needed."[1] The want is still felt. To me the preparation of this hasty sketch of the earlier days has been a work of great enjoyment. I have had to deal with Mount Wollaston and with Weymouth, those twin settlements in the first infancy of New England life, and in the history of each I could not do otherwise than take a deep hereditary interest. It was at Mount Wollaston, close to the spot where once stood the May-pole of the wild Morton, that John Quincy lived and died, — it was in the old parsonage of Weymouth, almost within a stone's throw of the site of Weston's plantation, that John Adams was married to the grand-daughter of that John Quincy. Nevertheless, no degree of personal in-

[1] Savage's Winthrop, v. 1, p. 163.

terest can convert a hurried sketch into a careful history, and Weymouth deserves no less. Nor should the story of later development remain untold. It necessarily lacks, indeed, those elements of strangeness, of remoteness and of mystery, which lend their charm to the earlier periods which we have considered today, but the record is none the less of sufficing interest.

The children of Weymouth, during the present century, have gone forth in peace and in war, and are now scattered all over the common country, and, indeed, over the civilized world. Her children, too, remaining at home, have altered and diversified the old town until the fathers would know it no longer. It must be for others to recount these changes of the later years. I prefer to leave the narrative on the threshold of the new era and before the old order of things had yet begun to pass away, — while a fresher and a purer air still hung around the Great Hill, and while a certain fragrance of the primeval forest gathered about Whitman's pond. I prefer to leave it while Joshua Bates, newly come back from the continental army, a colonel of artillery at twenty-eight, was meditating those busy enterprises which were destined to infuse a new life into his native town; and I shall not seek to follow that other Joshua Bates, then unborn, whose destiny it was to migrate back to the mother country, and there in fullness of time to die at the head of the first commercial firm of London or the world. We leave Weymouth just emerging, weak but alive yet, from the long ordeal of an eight years' war, and entering on a more prosperous career; we leave it while brave old Brigadier Lovell yet viewed his broad acres from the summit of King-Oak Hill, — while Dr. Cotton Tufts still served the town whether at the bedsides of the sick or in the councils of the State, and ere yet the grass had grown

over the new-made grave of the good old Parson Smith. Two centuries and a half of municipal life are now completed, and in celebrating the event of to-day may we not fitly close with the earnest hope that the succeeding years may be as blessed as those which are past, — that unity, virtue and good-will may long find their abode within the limits of the ancient town, and that, even more in the future than in the past, "may peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces."

WEYMOUTH IN ITS FIRST TWENTY YEARS.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY,
NOVEMBER, 1882,

BY

GILBERT NASH, Esq.,

SECRETARY.

Not long since, the statement was made by one of our leading journals, that the first church in Weymouth was formed in 1635;* and an inquiry for the authority for such a statement elicited the following reply: "The Massachusetts Colonial Records [1: 149] state, under date of 8 July, 1635, that 'there is leave granted to twenty-one ffamilyes to sitt down at Wessaguscus.' Gov. Winthrop in his Journal [1: 194] says, 'at the court [5 mo. 8] Wessaguscus was made a plantation, a Mr. Hull, a minister in England, and twenty one families with him, allowed to sit down there — after called Weymouth.' No explicit mention is here made of the first formation of the church in this connection but in lack of evidence of previous embodiment, it has always been assumed to have been coetaneous with the settlement of the town — or nearly so — following the

*The Old North Church of Weymouth was organized Jan. 30, 1638/9. The diary of the Rev. Peter Hobart, the minister at Hingham, Mass., from 1635 to 1679, reads: "Jan. 30, 1639, [N. S.] A church gathered at Weymouth." (From a paper on "The Organization of the Old North Church of Weymouth," read before the Weymouth Historical Society, Feb. 24, 1904, by George W. Chamberlain, and published in the *Weymouth Gazette*, March 18, following.)

general rule. Mr. Savage in his list of the early churches of Massachusetts puts it down thus: 'xi. Weymouth, 1635, July.' The very careful and accurate Dr. Clark [Con'l ch'hs of Mass., 16] says: 'The same year (1635) about twenty families located in Weymouth, from which the First church in that town was constituted, and Rev. Joseph Hull settled over them.' It is of course true that there were religious services, and possibly a church at Weymouth before this, but we are aware of no evidence carrying the life of the church now existent back of 1635."

This may or may not be the true date at which the church was formed. The evidence given in the foregoing article to establish the fact certainly does not prove this, nor does it afford reasonable ground for its probability, and is anything but satisfactory to the least critical inquirer. If it proves anything it proves too much, for, while it admits the lack of positive evidence upon the question, it makes an admission which will go far to overthrow its own position. It says: "In lack of evidence of previous embodiment, it has always been assumed to have been coetaneous with the settlement of the town — or nearly so — following the general rule."

Here are two points admitted, and the Journal mentioned should be good authority upon which to rest them. First, the lack of positive evidence, from which the necessary inference is that we must fall back upon probability or conjecture, as the basis of our judgment in the case. Second, that, as a general rule, churches were formed at the time settlements were begun, or soon after. Without question the latter statement is correct. The well known character and habits of the early emigrants, and the facts that have come to us in connection with them, prove this beyond a doubt. If, then, it can be proved that Weymouth was a prosper-

ous settlement at a much earlier date than that assumed for it, 1635, we shall go far to prove the probability, at least, of an earlier church organization. And this brings us to the subject of the present paper, namely, What are our facts relative to the early settlement of the town, and how do they concern the church and its ministers?

The very general assumption that there was no permanent settlement in Weymouth, (using the name by which the town has since been known), previous to the arrival of the Hull company, in 1635, can hardly be sustained in face of the very strong evidence to the contrary. C. F. Adams, Jr., Esq., in his address delivered 4 July, 1874, at the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the settlement of the town, and in his paper on the "Old Planters about Boston Harbor," read before the Massachusetts Historical Society, and published in its collections, "the ablest paper," says Rev. George E. Ellis, D. D., no mean judge of such matters, "ever read before that Society," proves conclusively that the Gorges company, which settled upon the deserted plantations of Thomas Weston's people, in September, 1623, and which, it has been usually thought, was wholly broken up in the following spring, left a number of its emigrants there, who remained and became permanent settlers. These were joined from time to time by single families or small companies, until, upon the arrival of Mr. Hull's company, the settlement had attained to quite respectable proportions.

This ground has been so carefully covered by Mr. Adams in the papers before mentioned, that it will be necessary only to mention very briefly the main facts, and to sustain them by such other evidence as may be had from the court and town records, as well as from private sources.

A careful analysis of these records will show that, instead of the company from Weymouth, England, in 1635, being the first settlers, there were, at the date of its arrival, certainly not less than fifty families, and perhaps seventy or eighty, already residing there; and it is more than possible that this was an important reason why this place was selected by this company for its settlement. A flourishing colony already established, was sufficient evidence of good soil, a good location, a favorable position for trade with the Indians, and for communication with the other plantations about the bay; besides, and this was no insignificant matter in those days, the protection thus afforded against the savages.

More than this, it is probable that many of the previous settlers were relatives or friends of the later arrivals. Lenthal, in his remarks before the Dorchester Council in 1639, says that many of his former people had preceded him, giving this as a reason why he came to Weymouth. The similarity of name, and the localities of some whose former residences are known, give color to this probability; and the name Weymouth, given at this time, 1635, to the plantation, may not be wholly owing to the influx of new people, sailing from Weymouth, in Dorset, but to the calling up of old memories in the minds of previous settlers, who, years before, sailed from the same port and perhaps lived there.

An examination of the public records will afford evidence, surprising in value and volume, of this early and continued settlement. Although the earliest record in the archives of the town bears date 10 December, 1636, and very few entries are prior to 1644–5, yet there are those undated that are probably earlier, and these, with the evidence reflected from later dates, together with corroboration received from other and

contemporaneous sources, give additional and strong proof in support of the same.

Thus we have the Gorges colony in 1623, the arrival of a new company from Weymouth, England, the following year, the capture of Morton in 1628, the visit of Gov. Winthrop in 1632, the tax lists of the Massachusetts Bay Colony for 1630 and onwards, which include Wessaguscus, and the incidental mention from contemporaneous sources covering nearly all of the intervening time. These afford a firm basis upon which to rest an earlier settlement than that of the Hull company. Later on, and still previous to that arrival, we learn from the colonial records that in March, 1635, the bounds between Wessaguscus and Mount Wollaston were referred to a committee for adjustment, and in the July following, a similar arrangement was made to fix the bounds between it and its next neighbor on the east, Bare-Cove, afterwards Hingham. In October, Richard Long was fined for making clapboards from good trees and selling them out of town, when he had been directed to make them into shingles for Castle Island; the proceeds of the fine to go towards a bridge in Wessaguscus. The Hull company could hardly have been so far advanced in business by this time, as this state of things would indicate; besides, Long was not a member of that company but must have been a prior settler. In March of the next year, Thomas Applegate, also a prior settler, was removed from his position as ferry keeper, and Henry Kingman, one of the new-comers, appointed to succeed him.

The assessment and payment of taxes is usually deemed conclusive evidence in matters with which they come in connection. If there were boundaries to be adjusted, there must have been residents on both sides of the line who were in contention about them. A ferry and a bridge, as means of communication,

would hardly be necessary where there was no population.

The earliest of the town records contains a list of land owners with a description of their property. The record is not dated, but the time can be fixed with certainty, within about a year and a half. The names of Elizabeth and Mary Fry, daughters of William Fry, deceased, are upon this list, and as his burial is recorded as having taken place October 26, 1642, the list must have been prepared subsequent to that time. At the close of these property descriptions is the record of the transfer of some of this same property, and it is described in the lists as belonging to the grantors. Two of these transfers bear date 21 and 26 May, 1644, thus showing the latest limit at which it could have been compiled. The true date is probably 1643, and there is reason for believing, from internal evidence, that Rev. Samuel Newman was the compiler, he being at that time a resident of the town, his removal to Rehoboth taking place in 1644.

In this list, which is very incomplete as will be easily seen, there are the names of 71 persons with a general description of the property then owned by them. In these descriptions the names of 17 others are mentioned, from whom some of this property was purchased, or to whom the original grants were made. There are also mentioned as owners of property bounding the different lots described, the names of 52, who do not appear in the other two classes, yet who must have been property owners or they could not have been abuttors, making in all 123, at least, real estate owners at the time the list was made up. Why this large number escaped record we have no means of knowing, but since such is the fact we may reasonably infer that many others may have been omitted altogether, and that the full number was originally much greater; in

fact we have evidence that this was so, from incidental mention in the later records. Taking, however, the lists as they come to us, we have the names of 123, without doubt most of them heads of families. These, at an average of five to the family, a moderate estimate for those days, would furnish a population of more than 600.

Of these 123, only 17 are found in the list of the Hull company, 20 March, 1635; the remaining 106 must have come in at some other date. Besides these above mentioned, there are found upon the birth record of Weymouth, previous to 1644, the names of seven, belonging to families not before enumerated, and this record is notoriously incomplete. A careful examination of these 130 families will throw further light upon the matter. Some of them came into the settlement subsequent to 1635, but only a few. Many are known to have been earlier residents. Some came with the Gorges company in 1623, and had resided here since that time, and many others were among the arrivals continually coming in during the eleven intervening years before the arrival of Mr. Hull and his company.

Bursley, Jeffries, and probably Ludden, with several others, were members of the Gorges company. Henry Adams, John Allen, Robert Abell, Stephen French, John Glover, Walter Harris, Edmond Hart, James Parker, Thomas Richards, Thomas Rawlins, Clement Briggs, Richard Sylvester and Clement Weaver, came in 1630, or soon after; William Torrey, as late as 1640, while the large majority were here at the date of the making up of the record, but further than this nothing is known with certainty. From the evidence we have, however, we may fairly presume that many of them were settlers previous to the arrival of Gov. Winthrop, and that some of them were of that company from Weymouth, England, in 1624, of whom

Prince makes mention, and of whom something more will be said hereafter. Of the settlers who were here in 1628 and 1630, we know but little beyond the fact that they were here at that date, and that Thomas Morton, of Mount Wollaston, of unpleasant memory, was on intimate terms with some of them, and was arrested by the Plymouth authorities, while on a visit here in 1628.

So, then, our facts relative to the early settlement are briefly these. A permanent settlement in the fall of 1623, by Capt. Robert Gorges and his followers, continual additions during the next four years, the record of the arrest of Morton in 1628, for which the settlement was taxed £2, to £2: 10*s.* for Plymouth, showing the comparative size of the two plantations, casual mention for the following three years, the visit of Gov. Winthrop on his way to and from Plymouth, in 1632, record of births in 1633, and the colonial tax lists from 1630 onwards until the erection of the settlement into a plantation, with the right of a deputy to the General Court.

It will be remembered that the original settlers of Wessaguscus, or Weymouth, were what would now be termed "squatters," and their titles simply those of possession, the real owners being the Indians, whose rights were general and not individual. The English titles were vested in governmental grants to the large companies like the Plymouth, the Gorges and the Massachusetts Bay. These early settlers came into the territory of Wessaguscus before it fairly was in the possession of either company; consequently they could only acquire such title as the native holders could give them, to be confirmed by later authority, whatever that might be. Weymouth extinguished the Indian title to its territory by purchase; the deed bearing date 26 April, 1642, was executed by the resident chiefs, who

sign themselves Wampetuc, alias Jonas Webacowett, Nateaunt and Nahawton, and is recorded among the Suffolk Deeds. Nateaunt's beach and probable camping ground was at the foot of Great Hill, in North Weymouth. The town was therefore now in a position to confirm the planters in their possessions, and the existence of the list of possessions made soon after, seems to indicate that this was done.

There are reasons why the early contemporaneous records and writers so seldom mention this town and its affairs, in the fact of its different origin, the marked jealousy, not to say unkind feelings with which the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies regarded it. It had a more commercial element in its constitution. It was, also, in its incipience, episcopal in its ecclesiastical relations, which, although gradually relaxing, carried enough of the flavor of the "establishment" with it to make it anything but palatable to the taste of their puritan and independent neighbors. The relations then existing between them and their neighbors about the Bay we cannot determine with certainty now, but we may judge something of what they were by the casual mention, and the incidental exhibitions of feeling, cropping out but too frequently.

If it were the usual custom in the settlement of this country to form churches immediately after taking permanent possession, and of this there can be little doubt, then Wessaguscus should have had a church several years at least before the arrival of Rev. Joseph Hull; and perhaps by a careful study of the facts we have, and the results growing out of them, we may make our probabilities approach more nearly to positive evidence than we have been able heretofore to do, although we may not quite reach the point we wish to attain.

With the Gorges company in the autumn of 1623, came Rev. William Morrell, their minister, a clergyman

of the Established Church. He appears to have been a quiet, scholarly gentlemen, of cultivated tastes and refined habits, much better fitted for the duties and enjoyments of an English rectory, than to found and build up a church in the rough settlements of a new country. He could better enjoy the congenial society of his equals, at home, than guide the rude, independent minds of those who constituted his companions in this, to him, wholly unknown enterprise. The whole plan of the undertaking was conceived and started in a spirit particularly unconscious of the real position of affairs where it was to be executed. It was a paper campaign, projected by an impracticable general, and entrusted to incompetent officers. As such the result was inevitable failure. It was started with organization and machinery enough to carry on a colony of the greatest magnitude after years of successful growth; and in order to give it dignity and importance, and to secure the favor of the home government, its ecclesiastical character and position were well cared for in the plan. Mr. Morrell was its minister, sufficient for the needs of its first company. He was the pioneer to whom was intrusted all of the preliminary work that was to speedily result in a flourishing bishopric, and as such he was clothed with ample powers, with full control of all the churches present and in immediate prospect upon these shores. The reality soon satisfied him that the plan was a failure, or that he was not the man to execute it. A rigorous climate, an inhospitable coast, and the companionship of uncongenial spirits were more than he had bargained for and more than he could bear. With the discouragements of many of his associates he sympathized. Thus we find that he remained with his charge about a year and a half and then returned to England, sailing from Plymouth; having had the rare good sense and discretion to keep his ecclesiastical powers

and authority to himself, for he did not attempt in the least degree to exercise these, although they were so large, showing them only when about to leave. With this marvellous prospect before him when he undertook the position, and the facilities given him to carry out almost any ideas he may have entertained respecting his ecclesiastical work, however extravagant they may have been, is it presumptuous to suppose that he did not neglect the very first step necessary to carry out the plan of the enterprise, which would be the formation of a local church? We have no positive evidence that he did this, but the probabilities would certainly seem to favor such a proceeding. Without such an organization he could hope to accomplish but little; with it he would have made a beginning and laid the foundations, at least, upon which to erect the imposing structure, that had filled the minds of the original projectors in England.

For the chronicles of the church and minister during the next ten years we have to rely mainly upon a single statement, we might almost say tradition, and that somewhat vague and unsatisfactory. The passage in "Prince's Chronicles" relating to this settlement seems not to be credited by Mr. Adams, yet it is of such a nature that we can hardly pass it by as entirely without foundation. It reads as follows: "This year comes some addition to the few inhabitants of Wessagusset, from Weymouth, England, who are another sort of people than the former." Then follows in brackets ["and on whose account I conclude the town is since called Weymouth"]. To this is appended the following note: — "They have the Rev. Mr. Barnard, their first non-conformist minister, who dies among them. But whether he comes before or after 1630, or when he dies is yet unknown, nor do I anywhere find the least hint of him, but in the manuscript letter taken

from some of the oldest people of Weymouth." The authority upon which this whole passage depends is the manuscript letter. The statement is a very important one, and would seem to be entitled to more weight than Mr. Adams is inclined to allow it. Rev. Thomas Prince was born 15 May, 1687, and was old enough before their decease, to know many of those who were the children of the very earliest settlers of the town. From them he undoubtedly obtained the information contained in the manuscript letter. And who were these people and how much value should attach to their testimony? As an answer let us look at the record of a single year, that of 1718, when Mr. Prince was 31 years of age. Among the deaths of that year we find the following: — Samuel, son of Elder Edward Bates, Capt. Stephen French, son of Stephen French, (Edward Bates and Stephen French were members of the Dorchester council, Feb., 1639, in the Lenthal matter, from the Weymouth church); Ichabod, son of Capt. John Holbrook; James, son of Dea. Jonas Humphrey; James, son of Robert Lovell; Lieut. Jacob, son of Capt. James Nash; John, son of Robert Randall; Dea. John, son of Joseph Shaw; William and Jonathan, sons of Capt. William Torrey, and John, son of John Vinson. These were all old men, and their fathers were among the first settlers of the town, and all, fathers and sons, were among its most intelligent and important citizens. This is the record for a single year. While Mr. Prince was in the prime of life there were scores of such, from whom his information would come only second hand. The death of Rev. Samuel Torrey, one of the ablest ministers of his day, the pastor of the church in Weymouth for many years, occurred in 1707, when Mr. Prince was 20 years old, whom he well knew, and whose authority would be unquestioned. Here were sources of information from

which he probably drew his account. He has always had the reputation of being a very careful historian, and any statement of his should not be hastily set aside. Mr. Prince himself does not appear to doubt its correctness, but is surprised to find no mention made of the company and the minister, Mr. Barnard, in contemporary writers. As before intimated, satisfactory reason could no doubt be found for such omissions were the relations between the few scattered settlements of the time known to us. If we may not give some credit to this tradition upon such an authority, it will be hardly worth our while to pursue our inquiries further in this direction, for it is by just such incidental testimony, and that alone, that we are to establish much of our proof. And this is often the most satisfactory evidence, for the very reason that it is incidental and indirect, and therefore less liable to be swayed by prejudice or predisposition. Again, the probabilities are strongly in favor of the existence of this Mr. Barnard as the minister; for with such antecedents and surroundings as these early planters had, it would be natural and proper for them to have a minister, and in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, may we not credit the statement of Mr. Prince, that these settlers at Wessagusset had for their minister, Mr. Barnard, who lived and died among them; and that the statement did not come merely from a confusion of names, consequent upon the appearance of Massachiel Barnard, a member of the Hull company, who made his home in the town for several years? For similar reasons may we not well believe that this people and minister were not without a church for a series of years?

We have no further record of church or minister until 1635, when permission was given, 8 July, by the General Court, for Rev. Joseph Hull and 21 families

to sit down at Wessaguscus. On the 2d of September, following, the name of the settlement was changed to Weymouth, and it was made a plantation, with a privilege of a deputy to the General Court. Mr. Hull was also made a freeman at the same time. His first grant of land is recorded as in Weymouth, 12 June, 1636. The same year he also received a grant of land in Hingham. In 1637, he was reported as being still in Weymouth, while the same year, probably later and transiently, he is named among the list of first settlers in Salem. He was also heard from about the same time, preaching at Bass River, Beverly. In September, 1638, he was chosen deputy to the General Court from Hingham, and was also appointed a local magistrate for the same town. His son, Benjamin, was baptized there, 24 March, 1639; and again he was elected its deputy to the General Court. 5 May of that year, he preached his farewell sermon in Weymouth, and later, in the same month, is heard from at Barnstable, in Plymouth colony, making a settlement.

His sojourn at Barnstable was a short and stormy one, for he had hardly become settled there with his little company when the territory was entered upon by Rev. Mr. Lothrop and his flock from Scituate. There his daughter Joanna was married in November, 1639, to Capt. John Bursley, who was unquestionably the Bursley of the Gorges company, at Weymouth, in 1623, whom we find back again in that town as a land owner in 1643. Mr. Hull was made a freeman of Plymouth colony, in December, 1639. There seems to have been trouble in the Barnstable church, and Mr. Hull preached at Yarmouth so acceptably, that, early in 1641 he received a call from the church there, which he promptly accepted, and for which both he and his wife were excommunicated by the Barnstable church. On this account perhaps, and possibly from the influ-

ence of the Plymouth authorities, who appear to have become hostile to him, his stay at Yarmouth was of short duration, for we find him as preacher at the Isle of Shoals, in March, 1642. He seems not yet to have wholly abandoned the Plymouth colony, for, 11 March, 1642, his wife Agnes renews her covenant with the Barnstable church, and 7 March, 1643, a warrant for his arrest is issued by the court, "should he continue his ministrations as minister or magistrate in that colony." His troubles there appear to have been adjusted, for he was received back into the Barnstable church, 10 August, 1643. He now bids a final farewell to that colony, and we next hear of him as preaching at York, Maine, where, or in that vicinity, he remained for 8 or 10 years, subject however to the not very friendly attentions of his Massachusetts Bay colony acquaintances. He afterwards returned to England, and was, in 1659, rector of St. Buryan's, Cornwall, where he remained about three years, when his name appears among the ejected ministers under the "St. Bartholomew Act." He again took refuge in America, where he was found, 1665, the year of his death, once more at the Isle of Shoals, having been driven from Oyster River by the Quakers.

Mr. Hull was born in Somersetshire, England, about the year 1590; was educated at Oxford University, St. Mary's Hall, where he graduated in 1614; became rector of Northleigh, Devon, in 1621, which position he resigned in 1632, when he commenced gathering from his native county and those surrounding it, the company with which he sailed from Weymouth, Dorset, 20 March, 1635.

"Mr. Hull," says Savage, "came over in the Episcopal interest," and his sympathies appear to have leaned in that direction, although while in America he was professedly a non-conformist, or Independent; hence,

probably, the jealousy and petty persecution which followed him with more or less virulence, during the greater part of his residence on these shores. He was a man of worth and learning by the admission of Hubbard. He must have been a popular man from his success in securing followers to make up his company of emigrants, and his selection by the voice of his constituents at three different elections as deputy to the General Court, twice at Hingham, and once at Barnstable. He must have been an acceptable preacher from the eagerness with which his services were sought. Dr. Mather places him among our "first good men;" and Pike, his successor at Dover, remembers him as a reverend minister, while Gov. Winthrop says he was "a very contentious man." Possibly the worthy Governor may not have been quite free from prejudice against the free-spoken, Independent minister, with Episcopal antecedents and tendencies, yet the frequent removals, numerous troubles, vexations and lawsuits, certainly give room for the Governor's opinion. No fault seems to have been found with his moral or religious character, but he was certainly unfortunate while in this country by having circumstances so often against him, or in having so many bad neighbors. It is somewhat doubtful whether he was ever settled over the church in Weymouth.

Rev. Thomas Jenner was in Weymouth in the early part of 1636, and took the freeman's oath in December of that year. According to Mr. Savage he was in Roxbury a year or two previous to that. Soon, in 1637, he received a call from the Weymouth people. The same year, according to Winthrop and Hubbard, "divers of the ministers and elders went to Weymouth, to reconcile the differences between the people and Mr. Jenner, whom they had called for their pastor, and had good success." We find, also, from the General Court rec-

ords, that this course was ordered by the court. He remained there for several years, and in 1640 represented the town in the General Court. He retired from the ministry there for some reason unexplained by the records, although we may get a hint at what it was, and went to Saco, Maine. Not much is known of him, further than this: that he came to Weymouth as early at least as the year following the arrival of Mr. Hull, and that he came in the interest of the ministers and authorities of the Massachusetts Bay colony, and was sustained by them through the troubles that ensued.

And now a third minister appears upon the scene, Rev. Robert Lenthal, who was in Weymouth as early as 1637, where "he disseminated his new doctrines, made proselytes and collected a strong party to oppose the new organization of the church, which took place 30 Jan'y, 1638," according to notes appended to a sermon preached by Rev. Josiah Bent at the dedication of the new meeting-house in North Weymouth, 28 November, 1832. These notes were prepared by Hon. Christopher Webb, who was deeply interested in Weymouth history and had been long engaged in collecting materials for historical purposes. Mr. Savage also states that Mr. Lenthal was in Weymouth in 1637, "but not pleasing the Governor was forbid to be ordained." Matters in the church, instead of growing better after the council of 1637, which met with such "good success in reconciling the differences between Mr. Jenner and his people in Weymouth," became so much worse that it was deemed necessary to call a second council or conference, which was held at the house of Capt. Israel Stoughton, in Dorchester, a magistrate of the colony, 10 February, 1639. Notes of the proceedings were taken by Capt. Robert Keayne (brother-in-law of Rev. John Wilson), which have

been preserved among the Stiles manuscripts in Yale College Library. From these notes much valuable information has come to light. The council must have been considered a very important one, since we find among its members, Rev. John Wilson, pastor, and Rev. John Cotton, teacher, of the church in Boston; Rev. Zechariah Symmes, teacher, of the church in Charlestown; Rev. John Weld, pastor, and Rev. John Eliot, teacher, of the church in Roxbury; Rev. Samuel Newman, (who went to Weymouth the same year); Rev. Thomas Jenner, of Weymouth; Mr. Edward Bates and Mr. Stephen French, of Weymouth, the former of whom, and not the latter as Mr. Trumbull has it, was then, or soon became, a ruling elder of the church in that town; also a private man, perhaps Capt. Keayne himself.

In those days one of the surest and most expeditious ways of disposing of a troublesome competitor, and one which has not yet been entirely abandoned, was to accuse him of heresy, and it was a very poor use of favorable circumstances that failed to convict, and thus dispose of the difficulty. The points which Mr. Lenthal was called to answer, and upon which he was supposed to differ, were, the constituents of the real church, and justification by faith. The churches of New England at that time very tenaciously held to the necessity of a covenant for giving "essential being" to the church, while Mr. Lenthal believed that baptism and not the covenant constituted this "essential being," as it was termed. He also objected to reordination after a new election. The real point of difference seems to have been the relative merits of the church and parish systems, perhaps, as at present illustrated in the settlement of ministers by ordination or installation, or in their employment as "stated supply;" settling or only hiring; a matter of purely

church polity. The churches believed strongly in the antecedence of election to ordination of church officers. The second point was justification by faith, as held by these churches against the construction put upon it by Mrs. Hutchinson and her adherents; a difference rather metaphysical than doctrinal, as it would appear to us. Both of these questions were satisfactorily settled, as far as the session of the council was concerned; Mr. Lenthal being sincere enough, or politic enough, not to differ too strongly from his judges.

The facts brought out were, that Mr. Lenthal had previously been a minister in good repute in England; that in the preceding years several of his people had come to America and were settled at Weymouth, and he expected more to follow. Mr. Jenner was now at Weymouth; Mr. Hull had not yet preached his farewell sermon, and there was not absolute harmony among the people. Upon Mr. Lenthal's appearance in New England, his former people who had settled in Weymouth, with probably some others, enough to form quite a strong party, urged him to come to that place and be their minister, to which he willingly consented.

In attempting, however, to carry out this arrangement, Mr. Jenner being in possession, and having a strong official support, trouble ensued, so great that the salary of Mr. Jenner failed to be paid; hence the conference, although the plea was unsoundness in doctrine, on the part of Mr. Lenthal. Mr. Jenner and Mr. Newman, as previously stated, were both members of this council, the former to be a judge in his own case, and the latter a party in interest, as we find him, almost immediately, upon the ground, and within a short time in full possession of the field; Mr. Hull preaching his farewell sermon the same year; Mr. Jenner a resident of Saco, within two years; while Mr. Lenthal goes to that refuge for the persecuted, Rhode Island, where he

was admitted as freeman, 6 August, 1640, and employed by the town of Newport in teaching a public school. It is said that he returned to England in 1641 or 1642. The trouble seems to have been that Weymouth was considered a public manor upon which any minister had a right to poach, and the difficulties that ensued in consequence, although satisfactorily settled, would not stay settled, but were continually breaking out afresh.

In this connection, J. Hammond Trumbull, in his notes upon the Stiles paper, published in the Congregational Quarterly for April, 1877, from which the report of the council of 1639 was taken, quotes from Winthrop as follows: "It is observable this church and that of Lynn could not hold together, nor could have any elders join or hold with them. The reason appeared to be because they did not begin according to the rule of the gospel." Was this a church formed by Mr. Hull, or was it an attempt to form a second? The vigorous repressive measures of the General Court seem to have prepared the way for a permanent settlement of the difficulties, the prominent actors in the Lenthal faction being quite summarily dealt with. John Smith was fined £20 and committed during the pleasure of the court; Richard Silvester was fined £2 and disfranchised, for "disturbing the peace by combining with others to hinder the orderly gathering of a church in Weymouth, and to set up another there,— and for undue procuring the hands of many to a blank for that purpose." Mr. Ambrose Martin, "for calling the church covenant a stinking carrion and a human invention, etc., was fined £10 and ordered to go to Mr. Mather to be instructed by him." Mr. Thomas Makepeace, "because of his novile disposition was informed that we are weary of him, unless he reform;" and James Britton, "for his not appearing was committed,

and for his gross lying, dissimulation and contempt of ministers, churches and covenant was openly whipt." Thus promptly was heresy and insubordination crushed by our fathers, and freedom of speech, action and conscience protected,— in their way.

The way having been thus prepared, Rev. Samuel Newman came to Weymouth in 1639, where he remained for four or five years, but the seeds of former troubles had not yet ceased to sprout; the difficulty was not wholly overcome; the spirit of unrest that had for some years so possessed the people would not so soon be quieted. He found his position anything but a bed of roses, and he was glad to emigrate to escape the labor of so hard a field; therefore, in 1644, he, with some 40 families, sought refuge in Seekonk, which, in memory of the occasion and its cause, he called Rehoboth, "The Lord hath made room for us." Not because Weymouth had become too narrow in territory for them, for probably not a quarter of its acres had been taken up, but for the same reason that separated Abraham and Lot. The pressure was on the spirit and not upon the body; and so, rather than continue the quarrel, they sought a new home further in the wilderness. Common tradition, which most of the historians have followed, says that he took with him a majority of his congregation, but with the facts relative to the population that we have already before us, it will be easy to prove that this could not have been correct, for we have seen that at the date of the first meeting held by the original planters of Seekonk, which by the way was held in Weymouth, 24 October, 1643, the latter town had at least 130 families, probably a good many more, while of these only 23 names are found in the list of the original proprietors of Seekonk, four of whom certainly remained in Weymouth, leaving but 19 out of which to manufacture a majority of 130. This

emigration was indeed a serious loss, but its general effect was hardly perceptible, and the business of the town apparently went on as though nothing important had happened.

Rev. Mr. Newman was born in Banbury, England, in 1600; graduated at Oxford, in 1620; came to Dorchester, Mass., in 1636, and to Weymouth, in 1639; whence he removed to Rehoboth, where he died 5 July, 1663. "He was a hard student, an animated preacher, and an excellent man, ardently beloved and long lamented by his people. He compiled by the light of pine knots, a concordance of the Bible, the third at that time in the English language, and the best. While living he was defrauded of the pecuniary profits of his work, and when dead, he was robbed also of the name, the work being afterwards known as 'Cruden's Concordance.'"

With the withdrawal of Mr. Newman, and the settlement of Mr. Thomas Thacher, who was ordained 2 January, 1644, the perplexing trouble of the Weymouth church came to an end, and an era of extended prosperity dawned upon it. From this time forward the history of the church can be traced quite fully and accurately, although it has no records of its own previous to the time of Rev. William Smith, those for the first hundred years of its existence being missing.

So much for our brief record of facts. Some of them, however, and those among the more important, need to be accounted for or explained, in order to make the narrative consistent and satisfactory. The intense difficulties of the eight years from the arrival of Mr. Hull in 1635, to the departure of Mr. Newman in 1644, must have had an origin that is not revealed to us in the records at our command. What were the causes that produced them and contributed to keep them alive during this period? Why is it that contemporaneous

writers have so little to say about this settlement and its events during its first twenty years? Perhaps a closer look at the facts we have may throw some light upon the subject.

Rev. Mr. Morrell, it is admitted, came to this town in the Episcopal interest. He was a clergyman of the Established Church, clothed with extraordinary powers to form, govern and perpetuate churches of that communion. Whatever influence he exerted was in favor of the extension and strengthening of that organization. His people were in sympathy with him in this matter, and if he founded a church here it was of that denomination; if he did not, he left influences behind him that would naturally work towards the accomplishment of that purpose, and these influences would as naturally continue to operate while these settlers formed an important element in that community; they would of necessity oppose the ecclesiastical systems of the Plymouth and Bay colonies, then or soon to become their near neighbors. While the settlement was one, before the arrival of Gov. Winthrop and the rapid increase of settlements around the Bay, there was nothing to call up this feeling of opposition, for the few emigrants who came from time to time, even if their sympathies were at variance with the previous settlers, had enough to do to look after their own affairs; besides, the colony was not strong enough to quarrel. The arrival of Gov. Winthrop, the establishment of the colonial government, and the large tide of emigration that set in immediately after, had its effect upon the little plantation of Wessaguscus. The favorable situation, and the already established community, drew in many new settlers from other points, and the influence of the government, and the religious system it supported, soon made itself felt, and with the assistance derived from these sources, became at length predominant. Still the

old feeling of loyalty to the Church of England and to the Gorges company, was powerful enough to form a strong party.

Such was the position of affairs, when, in the summer of 1635, the arrival of Mr. Hull and his score of families introduced a new element of discord into the already divided community. The new comers, not in full sympathy with either faction, deemed themselves strong enough and of sufficient importance to have at least an equal voice in the councils of the town, and as there was no minister at their coming, and as they brought one ready-made at their hands, what better could they do than accept him for all? This at once aroused the opposition of the older settlers, and measures were immediately taken to prevent such a result. The friends of the government seem to have been the strongest and most energetic. They select Mr. Thomas Jenner, a recent emigrant to Dorchester, and invite him to take the field in opposition, which he was very ready to do, for we find him here in the year following. Success appears to have followed the movement, for Mr. Hull virtually retires from the contest, as the records show him in 1636 and 1637 as a candidate for the ministerial position in other places, and soon, with a sufficiently permanent location in the neighboring town of Hingham, to become its deputy to the General Court. Still he does not appear to have wholly relinquished his claim upon the Weymouth pulpit, for it was not until 1639 that his farewell sermon was preached.

The jealousy of the original settlers of any authority below the crown, outside of their own patent, may have prevented as close an intimacy with the neighboring plantations as would otherwise have existed; and this would furnish a reason why it is so seldom mentioned by them in connection with their own affairs. However this may be, the authority of the colonial government

was gradually extended over the settlement, and the people submitted with the best grace they could, but not without an occasional exhibition of the old spirit by way of protest. The town was reorganized, its name changed, and the privilege of a deputy to the General Court granted to it in the summer and fall of 1635. At once the three opposing elements show themselves, and the little town chooses three deputies, instead of the one to which it was entitled. Capt. John Bursley represents the original settlers, Mr. Wm. Reade those who favor the colonial government, while Mr. John Upham is the selection of the Hull emigrants, and, as has been sometimes the case in later days, the patronage of the ruling power proves the most powerful, and Mr. Reade retains his seat, while his two competitors quietly retire.

This of course did not tend to soothe the troubles, for, as we have already seen, they grew so rapidly, developing mainly in the church, the civil powers being too powerful for open resistance, that in 1637, the General Court deemed it necessary to interfere and ordered a council of prominent officers and ministers to settle the differences. This was followed by a second, neither party being willing to submit to an adverse decision. And, as if this difficulty were not enough, about the same time, 1637, appeared another discordant element in the person of Rev. Robert Lenthal, who had already some partizans in the divided parish. He needed but little solicitation to join in the fray, and we have seen the result of his interference, as far as the public records show. And now, in 1638, Mr. Samuel Newman becomes a fourth aspirant for the Weymouth pulpit. Truly there must have been a wonderfully attractiveness in this place or people to draw so many illustrious teachers thither at the imminent risk of woeful discomfiture. Yet nothing can be more certain than that

about the year 1638–9, there were no less than four ministers urging their claims to the pastorate of the Weymouth church, and that each of them had a strong following; nor can it be doubted that the causes that produced this state of affairs were deep-seated and some of them of long standing.

The question of the existence of the church through all of these eventful years cannot be definitely settled with the evidence we now have. We have proved a permanent and comparatively prosperous settlement during the whole of this period, and this fact argues a strong probability of a church organization, for in those days it was hardly reputable for a community to be without one. We are certain of Mr. Morrell, and we have important testimony in favor of Mr. Barnard, previous to 1635, — another argument in favor of the existence of a church, for ministers without churches were not so common in those days as at the present time. The coming of Rev. Joseph Hull in 1635, a regularly ordained minister, and of three others in the three following years, without any record of tradition of the formation of a church during that period, while there are many references to a church already existing, furnish perhaps the strongest argument in favor of a prior organization.

Negative evidence, or lack of positive statement, should not be forced, but since it has been employed to prove the formation of a church here at a given date, perhaps we may be permitted to urge it a little more strongly in favor of an earlier date for the same event. If there were, as is admitted, ten other churches in existence on the shores of the Bay at the arrival of the Hull company in 1635, and that company proceeded immediately to form the eleventh, in accordance with the universal custom, several of the preceding ten must have been called to assist in its organization, in which

case we can hardly conceive it possible that some one at least of the number should not have made the transaction a matter of record, or that their records should not in some way allude to it, for the formation of a new church was then a matter of some importance, but nowhere, in church or state or private records, do we find the slightest intimation of such an event; whereas, had there been a church formed at an earlier date, when there was no other existing on the shores of New England, besides that at Plymouth, and that not in sympathy, we have a very good reason why we hear nothing of it.

The material needs of the new settlement and other causes before alluded to might prevent its own record, while the distractions afterwards existing, and the consequent jealousies between the contending parties might easily forbid any subsequent one. The theory of a regular succession of pastors beginning with Mr. Hull in 1635, and following down through Mr. Jenner, Mr. Lenthal and Mr. Newman, until Mr. Thacher is reached, has been a favorite one, but is hardly admissible in face of the evidence already produced, which would rather go to show the attempted formation of a second church by some of the conflicting interests in opposition to one already in existence. We may hope at some time to discover further testimony with which to settle this vexed question, but for the present we must be content to allow it to rest upon no firmer basis than probability, yet with that strongly in favor of a much earlier organization of the church, reaching back perhaps to 1623.

WEYMOUTH THIRTY YEARS LATER

A PAPER READ BY

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS

BEFORE THE WEYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY, AT THE FOGG OPERA HOUSE, SOUTH WEYMOUTH, ON THE EVENING OF TUESDAY, THE 23D SEPTEMBER, 1904.

It is already five months since your Society celebrated the completion of its twenty-fifth year. It may be said to have then attained its majority. Yet, perhaps, this middle period of September is more appropriate for your anniversary than a day in April; for towards the middle of September, 1623, that is, two hundred and eighty-one years ago at this time, — possibly on what was then the thirteenth of the month, now the twenty-third, — Captain Robert Gorges, at the head of a little company of adventurers, sat down at Wessagusset. Thus, as nearly as can now be ascertained, the permanent settlement of a part of what has for hard upon two whole centuries and three-quarters of another been known as Weymouth, — the second permanent settlement in Massachusetts, — dates from this season, and, possibly, from this day of September. The Weymouth Historical Society commemorates the event to-night. It might well commemorate it annually.

But, in the first place, I crave indulgence while I say a single word personal to myself. I want to explain why I meant to be here last April, and why I am here now. Towards Weymouth, I confess to a pecul-

iarly kindly feeling. Not only was Weymouth the birthplace and maiden home of one whom, among my ancestors, I specially reverence, but to Weymouth I feel under personal obligation. It is a short story, soon told; it relates also wholly to myself, but here I feel at liberty to tell it.

Just thirty years ago last spring, on a day in April, if my memory serves me right, your old-time selectman, James Humphrey, — remembered by you as "Judge" Humphrey, — called at my office, then in Pemberton Square, Boston. Taking a chair by my desk, he next occasioned wide-eyed surprise on my part by inviting me, on behalf of a committee of the town of Weymouth, to deliver an historical address at the coming 250th anniversary of the permanent settlement of the place. Recently returned to civil life from four years of active military service, and nominally a lawyer, I was at that time chairman of the State Board of Railroad Commissioners, and, as such, devoting my attention to questions connected with the growth and development of transportation. To independent historical investigation I had never given a thought. As to Weymouth, I very honestly confess I hardly knew where the town so called was, much less anything of its story; having a somewhat vague impression only that my great-grandmother, Parson William Smith's daughter, Abigail, had been born there, and there lived her girlhood. Such was my surprise, I remember, that I suggested to Mr. Humphrey he must be acting under a misapprehension, intending to invite some other member of my family, possibly my father. He, however, at once assured me such was not the case, satisfying me finally that, a man sober and in his right mind, he knew what he was about, and who he was talking to. Subsequently, I learned that he did indeed act as the representative of a committee ap-

pointed at the last annual Weymouth town meeting; for an explanation of the choice appeared, — as "a great-grandson of Abigail (Smith) Adams, a native of Weymouth," I had been selected for the task. Overcoming my surprise, I told Mr. Humphrey I would take the matter under consideration. Doing so, I finally concluded to accept. Though I had not the faintest idea of it at the time, that acceptance marked for me an epoch; I had, in fact, come to a turning-point in life. That, instinctively, if somewhat unadvisedly and blindly, I followed the path thus unexpectedly opened has been to me ever since cause of gratitude to Weymouth. For thirty years it has led me through pastures green and pleasant places. But at the moment, so little did I know of the earlier history of Massachusetts, I was not aware that any settlement had been effected hereabouts immediately after that at Plymouth, or that the first name of the place was Wessagusset; nor, finally, that Thomas Morton had at about the same time, erected the famous May-pole at Merrymount, on the hill opposite where I dwelt. Thus the field into which I was invited was one wholly new to me, and unwittingly I entered on it; but, for once, fortune builded for me better than I knew. I began on a study which has since lasted continuously.

Weymouth is, therefore, in my mind closely and inseparably associated, not only with the commencement of what I dare not call a career, but with a fortuitous incident which led for me to more pleasurable pursuits than elsewhere it has been given me to follow.

That address of mine, the immediate outcome of the invitation extended through Mr. Humphrey in 1874, has since been more than once kindly referred to by investigators here in Weymouth; and, I infer from my being here to-night, it is even yet not wholly forgotten. I may add also that it is distinctly the cause of my

being here; for, as six months ago I thought over your invitation to address a Weymouth audience once more, it seemed to offer what must be a rare opportunity in any life,— an opportunity to go back, after years of study directed largely to historical topics, more especially to topics connected with New England, Massachusetts and the region hereabout, and to review what I in the beginning said, close to the spot where I said it. Accordingly, I this evening propose to find my text in what I uttered on King-oak hill thirty years ago last July; and, in so doing, to pass judgment upon it.

For a first performance, I will honestly confess it does not seem to me, as I now look over it, wholly devoid of merit. Curiously enough also, the best portions of it are distinctly the closing portions, in which I wrote with a warmth and feeling absent from the earlier part. Nevertheless, that Weymouth address of 1874, as I now see it, was, as a whole, wrong in conception and faulty in execution. It was wrong in conception, because in it I tried to cover too much ground. That it was defective in execution, is most apparent. Accepting an invitation to deliver a commemorative address on the 250th anniversary of the permanent settlement of Weymouth, I attempted an historical sketch covering the town's whole existence. I ought to have confined myself to a close analysis of its first twenty years. That period would have opened to me, had I known how to use it, a field of investigation at once ample in extent and curiously rich. Nor is this all; it would have done a great deal more. Unwittingly, I missed the opportunity of a life-time. Simply, I was not equal to the occasion. My consolation is that few would have been equal to it. But of this, more presently.

To make either a comprehensive or careful analysis of the early history of your town now, is out of my

power; nor would one evening's time admit of it. I will, however, say that to-day, not less than in the days of the late James Savage, "a careful history of Weymouth is much wanted."[1] Nine years after my prentice effort, your associate and recording secretary, Gilbert Nash, approached the subject both with a better comprehension, and a knowledge much closer and far wider than I could boast. But my effort, supplemented though it was by him, left much to be desired,—a desideratum it should be the mission of this Society to make good.

Turning then to Wessagusset, and the early history of Weymouth, and confining myself to them, I find its record composed of two parts:—the Wessagusset settlements, pre-historic almost in character, and the subsequent struggling into life of Weymouth, in the early years of the colony. The story of Wessagusset is in itself curiously interesting, as well as of momentous importance; and it was in connection with that I missed the opportunity of a life-time, to which I just referred. It vexes me now to think of it. It even brings to mind Whittier's familiar lines:

> "For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
> The saddest are these: 'It might have been!'"

It came about in this wise:—Weymouth is very classic ground; to what an extent it is classic I certainly did not at the time now in question appreciate; nor, I am confident, did your people appreciate it. Not only did some of the most dramatic, as well as momentous, episodes in the early life of Massachusetts here occur, but it so chanced that one at least of those episodes has been woven into a poem familiar as a household word. I refer, of course, to Longfellow's "Courtship of Miles Standish." It was with that I should forever have con-

[1] Savage's *Winthrop*, v. 1, p. 194, n.

nected my effort of 1874; I should have vindicated history, while showing how, as material for poetical treatment, Longfellow had failed to use it as it might have been used. He also had proved unequal to the occasion. You remember the episode in Longfellow's poem to which I refer; it is the seventh part, entitled "The March of Miles Standish." I would like to read the whole of this part to you; and then, in sharp contrast, set before you the historic facts. I must, however, confine myself to some two score lines of the poem, enough to recall its spirit, and follow them with a mere outline of the actual facts. But that will suffice:

"Meanwhile the stalwart Miles Standish was marching steadily northward,
Winding through forest and swamp, and along the trend of the seashore.

. . . . . .

"After a three days' march he came to an Indian encampment
Pitched on the edge of a meadow, between the sea and the forest;
Women at work by the tents, and the warriors, horrid with war paint,
Seated about a fire, and smoking and talking together;
Who, when they saw from afar the sudden approach of the white men,
Saw the flash of the sun on breastplate and sabre and musket,
Straightway leaped to their feet, and two, from among them advancing,
Came to parley with Standish, and offer him furs as a present;
Friendship was in their looks, but in their hearts there was hatred.
Braves of the tribe were these, and brothers gigantic in stature,
Huge as Goliath of Gath, or the terrible Og, king of Bashan;
One was Pecksuot named, and the other was called Wattawamat.

. . . . . .

"But when he heard their defiance, the boast, the taunt, and the insult,
All the hot blood of his race, of Sir Hugh and of Thurston de Standish,
Boiled and beat in his heart, and swelled in the veins of his temples.
Headlong he leaped on the boaster, and, snatching his knife from its scabbard,
Plunged it into his heart, and, reeling backward, the savage
Fell with his face to the sky, and a fiendlike fierceness upon it.
Straight there arose from the forest the awful sound of the war-whoop,
And, like a flurry of snow on the whistling wind of December,
Swift and sudden and keen came a flight of feathery arrows.
Then came a cloud of smoke, and out of the cloud came the lightning,
Out of the lightning thunder; and death unseen ran before it.
Frightened the savages fled for shelter in swamp and in thicket,

Hotly pursued and beset; but their sachem, the brave Wattawamat,
Fled not; he was dead. Unswerving and swift had a bullet
Passed through his brain, and he fell with both hands clutching the greensward,
Seeming in death to hold back from his foe the land of his fathers.

"There on the flowers of the meadow the warriors lay, and above them,
Silent, with folded arms, stood Hobomok, friend of the white man.

. . . . . .

"Thus the first battle was fought and won by the stalwart Miles Standish.
When the tidings thereof were brought to the village of Plymouth,
And as a trophy of war the head of the brave Wattawamat
Scowled from the roof of the fort, which at once was a church and a fortress,
All who beheld it rejoiced, and praised the Lord, and took courage."

Such is the poet's rendering; now what were the facts? We all recognize in these cases what is known as "poetic license." It is the unquestioned privilege of the poet to so mould hard facts and actual conditions as to make realities conform to his idea of the everlasting fitness of things. On the other hand, it is but fair that, in so doing, the artist should improve on the facts. In other words, he should at least not make them more prosaic, and distinctly less dramatic, than they were. In the present case, I submit, Longfellow, instead of rendering things more poetic and dramatic, made them distinctly less so. This I shall now proceed to show.

And here let me premise that it was the habit of Longfellow, as I think the unfortunate habit, to improvise, — so to speak, to evolve from his inner consciousness, — the local atmosphere and conditions of those poems of his in which he dealt with history and historical happenings. It was so with the "Ride of Paul Revere;" it was so with the episodes made use of in the "Tales of a Wayside Inn;" it is notorious it was so in the case of "Evangeline" and Acadia; it was strikingly, and far more inexcusably, so in the case of "Miles Standish" and Plymouth. While preparing a poem

which has deservedly become an American classic, as such throwing a glamour of romance over that entire region to which it has given the name of the "Evangeline Country," Longfellow never sought to draw inspiration from actual contact with that "forest primeval" of which he sang; nor again, when dealing with the events of our own early history, did he once visit, much less study, the scene of that which he pictured. He imagined everything. I gravely question whether he even knew that the conflict he describes in the lines I have just quoted took place on the shores of Boston bay, and at a point not twenty miles from the historic mansion in which he lived, and the library where he imagined. He certainly, and more's the pity, never stood on King-oak hill, or sailed up the Fore-river.

What actually occurred here in April, 1623, I have endeavored elsewhere to describe in detail, just as it appears in our early records. Those curious on the subject will find my narrative in a chapter (vi) entitled "The Smoking Flax Blood-Quenched," in a work of mine, the matured outcome of my address here in 1874, called "Three Episodes of Massachusetts History." To that I refer them. Meanwhile, suffice it for me now to say, the actual occurrences of those early April days were stronger, more virile, and infinitely more dramatic and better adapted to poetic treatment, — in one word, more Homeric,— than the wholly apocryphal, and somewhat mawkish, cast given them in the lines I have quoted. Indeed, so far as the incidents drawn from the history of Weymouth are concerned, the whole is, in the original records, replete with vigorous life. It smacks of the savage; it is racy of the soil; it smells of the sea. It begins with the flight of Phineas Pratt from Wessagusset to Plymouth, his loss of the way, his fear lest his foot-prints in the late-lingering snow

banks should betray him, his nights in the woods, his pursuit by the Indians, his guidance by the stars and sky, his fording the icy river, and his arrival in Plymouth just as Miles Standish was embarking for Wessagusset. Nothing then can be more picturesque, more epic in outline, than Standish's voyage, with his little company of grim, silent men in that open boat. Sternly bent on action, they skirted, under a gloomy eastern sky, along the surf-beaten shore, the mist driving in their faces as the swelling seas broke roughly in white surge over the rocks and ledges which still obstruct the course they took. From the distance came the dull, monotonous roar of the breakers, indicating the line of the coast. At last they cast anchor before the desolate and apparently deserted block-house here in your Fore-river, and presently some woe-begone stragglers answered their call. Next came the meeting with the savages, the fencing talk, and the episode of what Holmes, in still another poem, refers to as,

> "Wituwamet's pictured knife
> And Pecksuot's whooping shout;"

all closing with the fierce hand-to-hand death grapple on the blood-soaked, slippery floor of the rude stockade. Last of all the return to Plymouth, with the gory head of Wattawamat, "that bloody and bold villain," a ghastly freight, stowed in the rummage of their boat.

The whole story is, in the originals, full of life, simplicity and vigor, needing only to be turned into verse. But, in place of the voyage, we have in Longfellow's poem a march through the woods, which, having never taken place, has in it nothing characteristic; an interview before an Indian encampment "pitched on the edge of a meadow, between the sea and the forest," at which the knife scene is enacted, instead of in the rude

block-house; and, finally, the killing takes place amid a discharge of firearms, and "there on the flowers of the meadow the warriors" are made to lie; whereas in fact they died far more vigorously, as well as poetically, on the bloody floor of the log-house in which they were surprised, "not making any fearful noise, but catching at their weapons and striving to the last." And as for "flowers," it was early in April, and, in spots, the snow still lingered!

That Longfellow wrote very sweet verse, none will deny; but, assuredly, he was not Homeric. At his hands your Weymouth history failed to have justice done it. The case is, I fear, irremediable.

Another cause of great subsequent regret to me has been the fact that, in 1874, the exact locality of the site of the original Wessagusset settlement, and of Weston's block-house, in which took place the death grapple just referred to, was not known. Tradition asserted that it was somewhere on Phillips creek, above the Fore-river bridge. Seventeen years later, in a volume entitled "The Defences of Norumbega," published in 1891, by the late Prof. E. N. Horsford, I chanced across a reproduction of Gov. Winthrop's map of Massachusetts bay of 1634. This map was in 1884 discovered by Henry Waters, among the manuscripts of the Sloan collection, preserved in the British Museum.[1] A portion of it, covering the Weymouth Fore-river and the Wessagusset site, was reproduced in the printed "Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society" (Second Series, vol. vii, pp. 22–30), and thereon is indicated the site of the original Wessagusset. That site no longer exists; and it will ever be matter of profound regret to me that the spot was not known, and the

[1] Concerning this curious and very interesting map, see *Proceedings Mass. Hist. Soc.* (Second Series), v. 1, pp. 211–214. There is a reproduction of the map in the large-paper edition of Winsor's *Narrative and Critical History of America*, v. 3, p. 380, with a descriptive note relating thereto.

exact location fixed, a few years earlier, at the time of the celebration of 1874. The spot was then unimproved, as the expression goes; it has since been "improved" out of existence. Sold for a trifling sum as a gravel, or a material, pit, had what has since come to light then been known, it might have been secured, and dedicated forever as a public water park fronting on the Fore-river. A permanent memorial should there have been erected.

Instead, bodily carried away, it has literally been cast into the sea; and the tide now daily ebbs and flows over the spot where, two hundred and eighty-two years ago last April, Thomas Weston's "stout knaves" established themselves; and where, on April 6, 1623, that hand-to-hand death grapple took place between Miles Standish and the fierce Pecksuot, the result of which struck terror to the hearts of the Massachusetts savages, and gave immediate safety, and years of subsequent peace, to the infant Plymouth plantation.

Thus, what occurred at Wessagusset in that pre-historic period has been in poetry and common acceptance so disguised, perverted and transmogrified as to have lost all semblance of itself. It can no longer be recognized; while the place where it all occurred has ceased to be. So it only for us remains to recur to actualities.

In one other aspect the temporary lodgment of Thomas Weston's "rude fellows" here in Weymouth from June, 1622, to April, 1623, has an interest in the Massachusetts annals. It is characteristic of a distinct phase in the first attempts at the European occupation of New England. I used the word "occupation" designedly, for those sporadic trading stations cannot be referred to correctly as settlements; they contained in themselves no power of self-perpetuation, being composed wholly of men engaged for wages in an effort

at the trade exploitation of a region. This is wholly different from colonization in good faith. Thomas Weston acted on a well-defined plan, when, early in 1622, he dispatched his company to establish themselves somewhere on the shores of Massachusetts bay. He himself expressed it: — "Families," he said, "were an encumbrance in any well-organized plantation; but a trading-post occupied by able-bodied men only could accomplish more in New England in seven years than in old England in twenty."

Nor was his, here at Wessagusset, by any means the earliest attempt of the sort. On the contrary, it had been preceded by a score of years; and, twelve months ago, on the 1st day of September, 1903, the 300th anniversary was observed of the similar, but even more abortive, experiment made by Capt. Bartholomew Gosnold on the island of Cuttyhunk, at the extreme western end of the Elizabethan group, off New Bedford. Again, three years later, in August, 1607, a similar attempt was made further to the eastward, when the Popham and Gorges plantation was established on the Kennebec. In that case, the adventurers did actually winter on the coast; but, as the survivors described their experience, they found the country "over cold, and in respect of that not habitable by Englishmen."

At this time, as probably long before and continuously thereafter, Monhegan island, southwest of Penobscot bay, seems to have been a rendezvous for fishermen; and when, in the early spring of 1622, those composing the advance of Thomas Weston's company arrived at the Damariscove station, on the group of islands just south of Penobscot bay, they found that the men belonging to the ships there fishing "had newly set up a May-pole and were very merry." But, a band of sea-farers only, there were no families in that company. These, one and all, were mere fishing or

trading posts; and, so far as I have been able to learn, not until the Mayflower put into Provincetown harbor on what is now the 21st of November, 1620, had any women of European blood ever set foot on New England soil. That day is properly celebrated. It marked the close of the trade-exploiting period, and the beginning of true colonization.

With almost no interval between, or, at most, with an interval of less than six months, — from early April to mid-September, — the Gorges settlement followed, here at Weymouth, on that of Weston. Except in one respect, I now find my thirty-years-ago treatment of this Gorges settlement not unsatisfactory. I failed to grasp its significance in connection with the European occupation of Massachusetts; and in that connection it has a very considerable significance. To a certain extent Mr. Nash afterwards made good my deficiencies. Nevertheless, the story has, I apprehend, even yet, never been fully told. To tell it should be one of the chief functions of your Society. I will endeavor briefly to outline it, as I now surmise it to have been. For, with inquirers into the events of a remote past, it is much as it is with persons looking for things in dark places. The intellectual perceptions, like the eyes, by degrees become accustomed to a murky environment; and when so accustomed, things quite invisible to others are by long-time investigators distinctly seen.

When that work of mine to which I have already referred, — the "Three Episodes of Massachusetts History," — appeared, now ten years ago, the introductory part was entitled "The First Settlement of Boston Bay." Recently, a fifth impression has been called for, and this afforded me an opportunity for a second preface to it, of some significance. When the book first appeared, it naturally passed into the hands of re-

viewers. As a rule, those reviews were not unfriendly; but the writer of one of them displayed, in perfect good faith, his absolute and complete inability to grasp the elementary significance of the work before him. Supposing that the "First Settlement" there referred to was that of Winthrop, in 1630, he intimated doubt as to the necessity for any further account of that incident, it having been already sufficiently dealt with. The man failed to get even a glimmering perception of the fact that I was therein endeavoring to exhume, and, so to speak, to vivify, a pre-historic settlement, one anterior to that of Winthrop, and obliterated by it; as much obliterated by it as are the ruins of earlier Egyptian temples, a succession of which have occupied the same site. I was, in fact, a sort of historical resurrectionist. Thus, as I sought to show, the real first settlement of the region about Boston bay was considerably prior to that of Winthrop; and, beginning with Weston's venture in June, 1622, was, some ten years later, merged in that of Boston. But, for years before Winthrop came, the region about Boston bay was occupied; and, moreover, nearly all those stragglers, — the "old planters" they were called, — came from Weymouth. Weymouth thus antedated Boston as a permanent European settlement by at least six years.

This fact I endeavored to establish, and fix in our Massachusetts history; and, moreover, the fact has singular historical interest. It was a struggle for possession between two forms of civilization and of religious faith. The Gorges settlement was ecclesiastical and feudal; that led by Winthrop was theological and democratic: that is, both as respects church and state, the Gorges attempt at Wessagusset was the antithesis, the direct opposite, to the Winthrop accomplishment at Shawmut. Moreover, the fate of the two settlements during the earlier and crucial period depended not on

events in Massachusetts, but upon a struggle for supremacy going on in England. Gorges represented Charles I; Winthrop, the Parliament. If the fortune of war had turned otherwise than it did turn, and Charles I had emerged from the conflict victorious, there can be little question Sir Ferdinando Gorges, and not John Winthrop, would have shaped the destiny of Massachusetts. Its history would then have been wholly other than it was.

In discussing the developments of the past,—the sequence of history,—it is never worth while to philosophize over what might have been, had something, which did not happen, chanced to happen at the crucial moment. What did occur, actually occurred; and not something else. None the less, so far as Weymouth is concerned, the forgotten story of that abortive Gorges attempt at a feudal pre-emption, is history; and, moreover, it is an extremely suggestive bit of history. At one time, the chances seemed to preponderate in favor of Gorges, and against Winthrop. First on the ground, the Gorges settlement represented prerogative at a period when king and primate had it all their own way. The permanence of the Puritan colony was thus for a time at stake; and, indeed, it was years before the Gorges claims ceased to occasion anxiety in the Boston council chamber. More than once a royal intervention, from which there was no apparent avenue of escape, seemed imminent. The single possible recourse was to a policy of delay, of procrastination; and, while pursuing it, those entrusted with the fate of the infant commonwealth watched in fear and trembling the slow course of English events, as they unfolded themselves towards a doubtful end. Time, and the chances of war on the other side of the Atlantic, at last dispelled danger; but the Wessagusset settlement, prior in time, long made itself sensibly felt as a disturb-

ing factor in Massachusetts development. And now, looking back on the celebration held here in 1874, and my own contribution to it, I think I may fairly claim that form and substance were at that time and there given to a chapter of history then altogether forgotten; but, when revived, not devoid of interest, because explanatory of much, before mysterious.

The Gorges settlement, moreover, was, I take it, a true settlement, not a mere attempt at trade exploitation. And by a true settlement I mean that it contained in itself the possibility of continued life; it was self-perpetuating, for those composing it were in part women. Of it, every line of contemporaneous record long since perished. That such a record once existed, we know. In the inventory made after his death of the property of William Blackstone, the recluse of Shawmut, among the titles of a not inconsiderable library is found the significant item, "ten paper books." They were valued at six pence each; but, in all human probability, those "paper books" contained Blackstone's day-by-day account of what occurred during the eleven years which elapsed between his landing at Wessagusset in 1623, and his removal from Boston in 1634. Those "paper books" we, moreover, know, preserved for over forty years and until the death of him who wrote in them, perished a month later in the flame and smoke which marked the outbreak of King Philip's war. In the next century also when, about 1750, Thomas Prince compiled his Annals, he made reference to "manuscript letters, taken from some of the oldest people at Weymouth." These also are hopelessly gone. Thus we have not, nor can we now reasonably hope ever to have, any direct and authentic memorials of earliest Weymouth. We do know, however, that Samuel Maverick came to Massachusetts bay in 1624, and that he was associated with Gorges. That he came to

Wessagusset, cannot be asserted.[1] The place was outside the limits of the Robert Gorges patent, and Maverick permanently established himself across the bay at Chelsea, then known as Winnisimmet. He there married the widow of David Thompson, another Gorges associate and the first occupant of Thompson's island, which, at the mouth of the Neponset, still perpetuates his name. To Samuel Maverick a son was born before 1630.

Thomas Walford, also one of the Gorges following, that doughty blacksmith of Charlestown who, by killing a wolf, discharged the fine imposed on him because of nonconformity in church-going, was a married man.

Of William Jeffreys and John Burslam, we know only that they remained at Wessagusset, and were living here, apparently in prosperous circumstances, at the time the place was incorporated as Weymouth. We do not know positively that they were married, or had families; but the inference is strong that such was the case. They were not adventurers, mere wanderers, of the Thomas Weston and Thomas Morton stripe. They

[1] As both Maverick and Blackstone were men of education, and apparently not without some means, belonging distinctly to the upper class of English life, and as they were also contemporaries of young Robert Gorges, it would seem more than probable that they were associates of his, and came over to New England in his party. Morell certainly was another of the same class. As respects Maverick, though he distinctly says he came to New England in 1624, yet he makes the statement forty years after the event, and as a matter of recollection. He was not speaking exactly, nor apparently from record. He may very well, therefore, have got the time generally as 1624, when in fact he arrived here late in 1623; or he may have removed from Wessagusset to Winnisimmet, and there established himself permanently during the spring of the following year. Hence his statement. On the other hand, it has been suggested that he came over with Capt. Christopher Levett, and plausible grounds can be given in support of such a theory. The exact date and circumstances of his coming will probably never be known. The only facts which can be stated with certainty are that he came about the same time as Robert Gorges, and that he was more or less associated with Robert Gorges's father, Sir Ferdinando. That he married the widow of David Thompson also does not admit of doubt.

had given hostages to fortune, and had a stake in the country.

When my address of 1874 was published, in one of the foot-notes[1] to it I dismissed as improbable an entry in Prince's Annals to the effect that, in 1624, there came "some addition to the few inhabitants of Wessagusset, from Weymouth, England," having with them the Rev. Mr. Barnard, their first non-conformist minister. Mr. Nash, in his paper entitled "Weymouth in its First Twenty Years," has taken a different view, setting forth in much detail his reasons for believing the fact stated. Very possibly I was wrong, and he is right; and certainly it is corroborative evidence of his rightness that Samuel Maverick fixes that year, 1624, as the time of his coming to New England, and Boston bay. Possibly he was one of Mr. Barnard's company; and he certainly afterwards sympathized in Mr. Barnard's religious views.

Into these questions it is unnecessary to enter. Nor would it be profitable so to do; for the salient facts are indisputably established that (1), the first Gorges contingent came out and set themselves down at Old Spain in September, 1623; that (2), the settlement there has been continuous from that day to this; (3), some of those thus sent out under the auspices of Gorges had families and left descendants; and finally, (4) that, starting from Wessagusset, these first planters established themselves at points favorable for commercial dealings in pelts and supplies on the north, as well as the south, side of Boston bay. That William Blackstone, the earliest occupant of the historic peninsula on which Boston rose, was one of the Gorges company admits of no question at all; that he came over as one of the companions of Capt. Robert Gorges and the Rev. William Morell scarcely admits of question. Beyond this,

[1] *Supra*, p. 36.

while all is matter of surmise, that "all" is merely a question of more or less.

But, whether the infant community was a puny bantling or a vigorous brat, I now find myself compelled to admit that its significance, and the secret of its later history down to the time when, in 1644,—a full score of years after the first settlement,—it was swallowed up, and its individuality forever lost, in an all absorbing environment, — the significance, I say, of this later history wholly escaped my observation when I prepared the address of 1874. As I have said, Mr. Nash has, to a certain extent, since made good my deficiences; I suspect, however, that even yet the riddle is but partially read. To be adequately treated, its treatment should be patient and microscopic. It should be studied in close connection with the course both of foreign events and of events in that subsequent agitation which, rending in twain the nascent commonwealth, permanently influenced the character of Massachusetts. By so doing it also went far towards shaping its destiny. I can now do no more than throw out a few suggestions,—mere hints, perhaps, or possibly surmises,—which it must be for others, members of your Society, to consider, giving them such weight as may properly be their due.

To appreciate fully what now here occurred during that formative period between 1630 and 1644, we must revert to the initial fact that Weymouth, or Wessagusset, as it was still called, was the New World centre from which the Gorges movement had gone forth; or, as the founder of Massachusetts would more probably have expressed it, it was the plague spot from which disease might spread. In the parlance now much in vogue among the less scientific, that disease had to be stamped out; and the magistrates of the colony of Massachusetts Bay proceeded to stamp it out. They

did, also, a very thorough piece of stamping-out work; but, however thoroughly it may be done, stamping-out is at best a rough and even brutal method of reaching results; and, as a rule, it is the recourse of men of intense and narrow minds, — those who never for an instant doubt that they are right. Whether priest and inquisitor, or minister and magistrate, — fulfilling their mission on Jews in Spain, or Huguenots in France, or Lutherans in Holland, or non-conformists in England, or churchmen in Massachusetts, — they know perfectly that they are engaged in the Lord's work; and, being engaged in it, they will not hold their hands. Why should they? Are they not God's chosen implement? Now it is an indisputable fact that every person on the Massachusetts shore connected with that earlier settlement, the old Gorges "planters," so-called, was soon or late either harried out of the country, or made so uncomfortable in it that he voluntarily withdrew, — in other words, went into exile. Morton of Mount Wollaston, he of May-pole fame, was the first victim. Of Morton it must be admitted little that is good can be said. He was an ungodly roysterer. His trading-post was a public menace as well as a nuisance; and, as such, was very properly abated. But there is no sort of reason to suppose that there was in the beginning any connection between Morton and Gorges.

Morton came out originally in June, 1622, and apparently as a companion of Thomas Weston's brother Andrew, on the ship Charity. He then remained at Wessagusset some three or four months, while the vessel which brought him out continued on to Virginia, thence returning to Wessagusset. In early October he again embarked, going back to England. He thus made acquaintance with the vicinity of Weymouth Fore-river, and the region about Boston bay, during the summer months, their period of alluring aspect. So

enamored was he of the country that he the next year piloted others back to it; one more band of pure adventurers, they came intent on exploiting the land, getting from it whatever of immediate value it might contain. But this second company, no more than the first, came out under the auspices of Gorges; nor did he look on it with favor. It must at least be said in favor of those sent out by him that they were uniformly men of education and substance; and they came to New England in good faith, here to establish themselves. Of this class were William Blackstone, Samuel Maverick, David Thompson and Thomas Walford.

Thomas Morton, and that strange, mysterious enigma who called himself "Sir Christopher Gardiner," were of an altogether different stamp; but, though in the beginning Morton at least had no connection with Gorges, subsequently he entered into close relations with him, and the inference is at least reasonable that he was arrested, forced to leave the country, and saw his house burned and his plantation across the Fore-river, on Mount Wollaston, desolated, quite as much because of the jealousy the new comers entertained towards the old Gorges "planters" as from any disapproval of himself, or because of the misdeeds of his crew. On the other hand, Sir Christopher Gardiner already, when Winthrop came, was dwelling mysteriously with his female companion on the cedar-clad hummock overlooking the mouth of the Neponset. Gardiner was unquestionably an emissary of Gorges, probably his agent, here to watch over his interests. He was arrested and his establishment, such as it was, broken up. Personally held under surveillance for months, he at length went voluntarily away. But, while in Boston, during the summer of 1631, he seems to have been treated with courtesy, and even with a degree of consideration.

Finally, in 1632, he went back to England of his own choice.

Next was William Blackstone, the hermit of Shawmut, the original planter from Wessagusset, who when Winthrop and his company landed at Charlestown in June, 1630, already had a house, with a young orchard about it, on the west side of Beacon hill, looking up the Charles towards Cambridge and Brighton. A recluse and a scholar, a missionary among the Indians, with whom he lived in peaceful and even friendly relations, this man, in every respect estimable, was, as Cotton Mather tells us, "of a particular humor, and he would never join himself to any of our churches, giving his reason for it, 'I came from England because I did not like the lord-bishops; but I can't join with you, because I would not be under the lord-brethren.'" These words, I fancy, furnish a key-note to the Gorges settlement. To those composing it, the new environment was unsympathetic; and, as early as 1633, Blackstone turned his face to the wilderness.

David Thompson, also one of the Gorges contingent, never was at Wessagusset. According to Thomas Morton, a Scottish gentleman, both a traveller and a scholar, quite observant of the habits of the Indians, he seems to have moved down from Portsmouth to Massachusetts bay about the year 1626, accompanied by his wife, and bringing with him several servants. A friend of Samuel Maverick's, he established himself at the mouth of the Neponset, on the island which still bears his name, and he may, possibly, have been a fellow-occupant, with Maverick, of Winnisimmet. He died in 1628, two years before the coming of Winthrop. Like the other Gorges "planters," he was a man of character, substance and education. As such, he also throws his ray of light on the Wessagusset company.

But Samuel Maverick, the first resident of East Boston, was perhaps, most typical of all the Gorges following. A man of gentle birth and fair education, later noted for his good fellowship and hospitality, he was active in social and business life, altogether a useful and public-spirited citizen. Distinctly of the Gorges connection and a churchman, he was "strong for the Lordly prelaticall power," as the Puritanic speech went. So, always conscious of the hostile feeling entertained towards him, at last, but not until 1648, — when for a quarter of a century he had been resident at Noddle's Island, as East Boston was called, — he was arrested, fined and imprisoned, and, subsequently, forced into exile. His crime was non-conformity.

Unlike the others, Thomas Walford, who I take it began his American experiences here at Wessagusset in 1623, was not an educated man or of the better class, so-called, in England; a smith by trade, he was one of John Winthrop's "common people," those who became two centuries later, Abraham Lincoln's "plain people." But, though a man of the anvil, he was also a churchman, an Episcopalian, and he sturdily stood by his creed. He had before 1630 made a home for himself and his family in Charlestown, where he dwelt in rude but secure independence. Accustomed to his wilderness liberty, and liking not the ways of the new comers, he would not submit to their severe rule, especially exercised in the matter of Sabbath observances. The old pioneer's Sunday had, probably up to that time, partaken more of the continental and Catholic than of Puritan characteristics. So he soon was in trouble. He was arrested, fined and banished. At Portsmouth he found a refuge and a welcome. In due time becoming a selectman of the town and a warden of the church there, he died in 1660, much esteemed in the place of his exile.

So much for those followers and adherents of Sir Ferdinando Gorges who had gone forth from the mother community here at Wessagusset, or had, coming from elsewhere, set themselves down at her side. Unless, like David Thompson, they died betimes, one and all, soon or late, they were either exiled point-blank, or harried out of the land. Not character, nor occupancy of the soil, nor obedience to the law, were of avail; they were not of the Lord's people! So much for the out-dwellers.

We now come back to the original settlement,— the plague centre! After 1625, and the return to England of the Rev. William Morell, — that first clergyman of Weymouth and the potential bishop *in partibus* of New England, — those who came in his company, and as the companions of Capt. Robert Gorges, separated in search of more favored sites for trade and plantation. Of the savages, they seem to have felt no apprehension; with them they lived in perfect amity. This alone is significant of their character. As for trade, even then, before the advent of Winthrop and his company, Boston bay was well known to the fishermen who annually frequented the coast — "lone sails off headlands drear" — and they periodically looked into Boston bay for barter and refreshment. The Indians of the interior could communicate with the coast only by trail or by the water routes; and of these last there were but four, the Monatiquot, emptying into Boston bay by the Weymouth Fore-river, the Neponset, the Charles and the Mystic. Of these, so far as the back country was concerned, the Monatiquot was least considerable. So, naturally, those of the first comers who had means and servants, and who did not fear solitude, sought more favorable sites, establishing themselves at the mouth of the Neponset, or on the shores of the Charles or the Mystic. After this dispersion, the Wessagusset com-

munity seems to have settled down into the slow monotony of a pioneer existence. William Jeffreys and John Burslam appear to have been the leading men, and their names only, from among those there remaining, have come down to us. Ten years later it was described by one who visited it as "a small village; very pleasant and healthful, very good ground, well-timbered, and with good store of hay ground."

But not until 1635, five years after the occupation of Boston, and when Wessagusset had been twelve years in existence, did the place receive any considerable, or, at least, certain accretion. Then, the Rev. Joseph Hull, with twenty-one families from England, was allowed by the Massachusetts-bay magistrates here to establish themselves; and Weymouth was at last incorporated by that name it has ever since borne. But it was still referred to as "a very small town;" though it has been computed that it then numbered from 350 to 600 souls. Now it was that trouble began. As the new Weymouth wine fermented in that old Wessagusset bottle, the scriptural adage received new illustration. But the story of what occurred is known only in part,—from hints and fragments scattered hither and yon, and which have painfully to be pieced together. What is known is, however, full of suggestion. With the new life came turmoil; and, in those times, the turmoil was sure to be theological in character.

It is safe to surmise that the departure of the Rev. William Morell to England, in 1624, and the withdrawal of Blackstone somewhat later, wearing doubtless the "old canonical gown" in which Winthrop six years later found him clad, did not, as things then went, deprive the little Wessagusset settlement of all spiritual nutriment. Those there remaining doubtless had, not a meeting-house, for they were Episcopalians, but a church, such as it was, in which religious services were

duly conducted on each Lord's day, the Prayer-book and ritual being in use. This had continued through a dozen years, when at last a veritable irruption set in. Of what ensued, nothing is clear; we have to grope our way in the gray glimmer of that early dawn. The Rev. Mr. Hull, we are told, made his advent in the interests of Episcopacy; but, if he did, he either brought with him, or encountered, a body of dissentients. That the old settlers eyed the new-comers askance is more than likely; but the enigma still awaits solution. All we know is that the little settlement, presumably at the foot of Great hill, and in and about Old Spain, was rent, not in twain, but in quarters; and soon their occupants were vociferously holding forth from no less than four rival pulpits. At last, so loud became the tumult of tongues, and so grievous was the state of spiritual affairs, that a delegation from the church of Boston made its appearance, — Heaven save the mark! — in the role of peacemakers.

Now, in 1638, the church of Boston, after an interlude of direst stress and storm, was at peace within itself; but the peace was that of a sternly enforced conformity, — a peace somewhat akin, in fact, to that order commonly associated with the name of Warsaw. The great Antinomian controversy had shortly before been brought to a close. Silenced and overborne were the wise, tolerant and forbearing councils of Winthrop and Cotton; a policy of "thorough" had been decided on, and proclaimed. The conventional priesthood having at last secured full sway, neither liberty of thought nor freedom of speech was to be tolerated in Massachusetts. This revised order of things, a new gospel dispensation, the 1638 delegation of the Boston church doubtless came to propagate in Weymouth. It was the spiritual, perhaps the inquisitorial, precursor of the civil arm. A few weeks only before, the Bos-

ton congregation had silently witnessed some very high-handed proceedings in the case of Mistress Anne Hutchinson; and at "the Mount," as what is now Quincy was then designated, the Rev. John Wheelwright had been made to realize the power of the magistrate. The Rev. William Hubbard gives the following account of what next occurred at Weymouth; and, though the Rev. William Hubbard's General History of New England is not now looked upon as a peculiarly veracious or reliable record, yet in this case it may be accepted as the most intelligible and consecutive narrative that has come down to us, in any degree contemporary with what took place: —

"The people of this town of Weymouth had invited one Mr. Lenthal, to come to them, with intention to call him to be their minister. This man, though of good report in England, coming hither was found to have drunk in some of Mrs. Hutchinson's opinions, as of justification before faith, etc., and opposed the custom of gathering of churches in such a way of mutual restipulation, as was then practised. From the former, he was soon taken off by conference with Mr. Cotton, but he stuck close to the other, that only baptism was the door of entrance into the visible church, etc., so as the common sort of people did eagerly embrace his opinion; and some laboured to get such a church on foot, as all baptized ones might communicate in, without any further trial of them, etc. For this end they procured many hands in Weymouth, to a blank, intending to have Mr. Lenthal's advice to the form of their call; and he likewise was very forward, to become a minister to them in such a way, and did openly maintain the cause.

"But the magistrates hearing of this disturbance and combination, thought it needful to stop it betimes, and therefore they called Mr. Lenthal and the chief of the faction to the next general court, in March; where Mr. Lenthal, having before conferred with some of the magistrates and ministers, and being convinced of his errour in judgment, and his sin in practice, to the disturbance of their peace, etc., did openly and freely retract, with expression of much grief of heart for his offence, and did deliver his retractation in writing under his hand in open court; whereupon he was enjoined to appear at the next court, and in

the meantime to make and deliver the like recantation in some publick assembly at Weymouth. So the court forbore any further censure by fine or otherwise, though it was much urged by some. At the same court, some of the principal abettors were censured; as one Smith, and one Silvester, and one Britten, who had spoken reproachfully of the answer which was sent to Mr. Bernard's book against their church covenant, and of some of the ministers there, for which he was severely punished; but not taking warning he fell into grosser evil, whereby he brought capital punishment upon himself, not long after."

To make this intelligible, so far as Weymouth is concerned, we must keep in mind a few dates connected with the great course of world occurrences. The events referred to in this extract from Hubbard's history, took place during the summer of 1638. A church tumult in Edinburgh on Sunday, July 23, 1637, a year previous, had brought matters in England to a crisis; and from that day Sir Ferdinando Gorges was wholly impotent, shorn of all influence. Thenceforth, he ceased to be in any degree an active factor in Massachusetts affairs; and his people in New England, no longer looking to him, must, as they best could, take care of themselves. Already, six months before the Edinburgh tumult, on the 29th of January, 1637, the Rev. John Wheelwright, the favorite divine of Mistress Hutchinson, had, on a day of special fast, preached in Boston that occasional discourse which was later made the pretext for a sweeping political proscription. On the 27th of May, 1637, the Massachusetts charter election, the equivalent of our annual State election, had been held at Cambridge, as the result of which young Sir Harry Vane had been superseded as governor by Winthrop, with the harsh and uncompromising Dudley as deputy. It was a political as well as a church upheaval; for Vane was, socially, the friend of Maverick, and, while in doctrine he sympathized with Wheelwright, he was the cynosure of the Hutchinsonian cult.

The conservative, or clerical, party thus found itself in complete political control; a control cemented and confirmed by the triumphant conclusion of the Pequot war, and the return of young Vane to England, both which events occurred in August. Every condition now pointed to the adoption of a policy of "thorough" — the stamping-out process was to begin. It did begin; and it was carried out. John Wheelwright, the first minister of those inhabiting part of the region two years later incorporated as Braintree, but which a century and a half later became Quincy, was the initial victim. He was banished, and his supporters made to see light,—real orthodox light! Next came Mistress Hutchinson. Her story has been told, by myself among others, in all possible detail.[1] I need only allude to it here. She, and all those who stood by her, were "sent away,"—in other words, driven into exile. This had occurred in March, 1638. And now, the stamping-out process being completed in Boston, the party in political control turned its attention to the out-lying districts. Weymouth was the traditional plague centre of prelatical poison, — we designate it Episcopacy, — the seat of the Gorges settlement, the abiding place of Morell, the spot whence Blackstone and Walford had emerged. No mercy was to be shown it. The last vestige of the ritual was to disappear from within the limits of the colony of Massachusetts-bay. Thus, with Weymouth, in 1638, it was much as with some French city in the days of The Terror, when a committee of the Convention of '93 there put in an appearance. So far as dissent and the suspects were concerned, it meant the end.

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[1] See *The Antinomian Controversy; Three Episodes of Massachusetts History*, Part II, pp. 363-581; *Antinomianism in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, 1636-1638;* Prince Society Publications, 1894.

It is needless to revert to colonial records, and again to tell the story of what was then done. Mr. Lenthal appears to have been a worthy man and a devout minister of God's word, as he read it; but he did differ from the powers that then were on certain abstract doctrines of baptism, re-ordination and justification by faith, whatever those terms may have signified. They have small meaning to us; but then, they implied heresy: and for heretics there was in 1638, and the years ensuing, no place in Massachusetts. He and his followers were summarily dealt with. Wise in his day and generation, Mr. Lenthal made haste to see the light, and to express a realizing sense of the error of his ways. He then took refuge in Rhode Island. His followers were sternly disciplined, reprimanded, threatened, fined, disfranchised, and "openly whipt." The insubordination was crushed out; so also were freedom of speech and religious liberty. But order reigned in Weymouth; conformity was thenceforth there complete.

The late Matthew Arnold was accustomed vigorously to declare that the great middle class of England, the kernel of the nation, was in Tudor times so disgusted with the cowled and tonsured Middle Ages that, during the first half of the seventeenth century, it "entered the prison house of Puritanism, and had the key turned upon its spirit there for two hundred years." The result was, he further declared, "a defective type of religion, a narrow range of intellect and knowledge, a stunted sense of beauty, a low standard of manners." Into the discussion which this utterance invites, I do not propose here to enter. I merely call attention to what all the study, investigation and thought of thirty years lead me to consider one of the most interesting and suggestive of the minor episodes of our early Massachusetts history, the final advance of the puritanical

glacier over the last lingering vestige of an earlier attempt at a distinctly more cultured New England civilization. I institute no comparison; I make no criticism. To discuss the might-have-been is, to my mind, hardly worth while. I call attention only to one still unwritten page of our Massachusetts history; a page the existence as well as the possible meaning of which had altogether escaped me, if indeed it had even as yet glimmeringly dawned upon me, when I addressed you here in Weymouth in response to your invitation of thirty years ago.

Thus, as I have since come to see it, the history of Weymouth, that local history which is the peculiar province and charge of the Society I to-night address, naturally divides itself into three parts — first, the Adventurous, in which Thomas Weston and Miles Standish, Squanto and Pecksuot, play their parts, and dramatic enough those parts were: second, the Feudal and Episcopal, in which Sir Ferdinando Gorges and Governor John Winthrop hold the stage, in London and at Boston, in Wessagusset and at Shawmut: and, finally, part the third, that Puritanic period of slow growth and gradual change which lasted for two whole centuries, from 1640 to 1840, and which Matthew Arnold has likened unto detention in a prison-house. My earlier utterances on the earliest and second periods I have passed in review; and now, in closing, I have something to say in criticism of the conclusions I then reached as respects the third, or final, period.

My former treatment of this later period, — that extending from 1640 to 1840, — I find was of the purely conventional character; a method of treatment, whether by myself or others, for which I have since come to feel a very pronounced contempt. Why is it, I would like to ask, that such undue prominence is in anniversary addresses always given to times and episodes

connected with wars and military operations? Take for instance, your own case. Weymouth now boasts a corporate and continuous history of some 270 years, — as such things go, a very respectable antiquity; and, during that time, its women have never seen, except perhaps a hundred and thirty years ago, or, just possibly, on one occasion nine years less than a century back, the flash of a hostile gun or the gleam of an enemy's flag. It is within the bounds of possibility that a grandmother, or, more probably, a great-grandmother, of some one among you did, on those days of April in the year 1775, watch from some summit of the town the smoke of burning Charlestown; or, again, like Abigail Adams from Penn's hill in Braintree, your progenitors on the distaff side may in March of the following year have looked curiously on that "largest fleet ever seen in America," numbering upwards of one hundred and seventy sail, and looking "like a forest," as, with Howe's evacuating army on board, the British ships lay in the outer harbor. Finally, on June 1, 1813, Weymouth men and women may from the Great hill have followed with anxious eyes the ill-fated frigate Chesapeake move out to her disastrous duel with the Shannon. But, not since Miles Standish grappled with the savage Pecksuot in the wooden block-house at Old Spain on the 6th of April, 1623, has an armed conflict between hostile men occurred on Weymouth soil. Yet in every narrative of the town, accounts and details of its part in war, and of its contributions thereto, occupy the place of prominence. In point of fact, no war or its operations, its successes or reverses, since the death of the Wampanoag, King Philip, in 1676, has exercised any direct influence on Weymouth history, or affected to any appreciable extent the town's development. In the war of the Rebellion, as in Queen Anne's war, in the French wars, and in the war of Independence,— though

in far less degree in the first than in any one of the latter,—Weymouth was called on for contributions in material, in money and in men; but after those struggles, as during them and before, life here moved on absolutely undisturbed in the even tenor of its way, — quite unchanged! The same people lived in a like manner, pursuing their wonted occupations; generations were born, went to school, were married and had offspring, grew old and died, as their fathers and mothers had done before them, as their sons and daughters were to do after them. Of great, far away events only echoes reached the town; and yet, what the town then did in connection with those distant great events becomes the staple of its story. This I submit is not as it should be; in fact it is not history at all.

Moreover, I am further disposed to contend that the record of Weymouth, as of its sister towns of Massachusetts without exception, whether in the War of Independence, or, more recently, in our Civil War, was not in all respects ideal, or in conformity with reason, experience and the everlasting fitness of things. Never, whether in Independence-day orations or in occasional addresses, does the declaimer weary of expatiating on the public spirit and self-sacrifice then displayed and evoked; but, on the other hand, read the record as set forth by Mr. Nash in the pages of his history, or registered in your town-books. Referring to the Revolutionary war, and its direct results on Weymouth, Mr. Nash puts first among them the excessive use of intoxicating liquors "which then became well-nigh universal." He speaks of this as a public "calamity," most far-reaching in its destructive effects on both the minds and estates of that generation, and of those that succeeded. My own investigations have led me to believe that what we term the "drink habit" with our Massachusetts race dated from a period long anterior

to any Revolutionary troubles. In this respect I think Mr. Nash greatly exaggerates the influence of army life. Assuredly, however, stimulating the alcoholic appetite cannot be accounted one of those features of the soul-stirring time in which posterity can take a justifiable pride. But, in saying what I have said, I wish to be explicit. I do not want to be misunderstood. For, on this head, communities are, I have found, sensitive; nor, I freely admit, does such sensitiveness on their part furnish any just occasion for surprise. On the contrary, it is very human, — altogether natural.

Not long ago, in Lincoln, where I now live, I expressed myself on this subject to the same effect; and I afterwards found I, in so doing, had occasioned pain, as well as surprise. I had seemed to speak depreciatingly of the dead, and of a period the memory of which was sacred. Nothing could have been further from my thought. The criticism I then made, and now make again, applies to all of our Massachusetts, I may say our New England, towns. Their records tell me the same story. Turn, for instance, to your own town books covering those heroic periods, whether Revolutionary or of the Civil war. Should you do so, you will find in them a wearisome repetition. In the first flush of excitement, volunteers, in each case, enrolled themselves in crowds, they were eager to get to the front; then came the cold reaction, and the consequent haggling. Call follows call for men — and yet more men; for war is insatiable, — and these calls are grudgingly responded to by votes providing for the payment of bounties, and by complicated plans for the procurement of substitutes. Never once in all those annals do you read of a stern exaction. On the contrary, the question always is as to how cheapest to avoid it. The heroic chord is rarely struck. That there were individual cases, many and touch-

ing, of self-sacrifice and lofty patriotic impulse, I am the last to deny. Was I not witness to them? Such you do well to commemorate and recall; nor can they be held in too green a memory. It is not to those I refer, but to the system under which war was carried on; it was weak, unscientific, to the last degree wasteful of blood and of treasure, — moreover, it was cruel to those in the field. Through it much unnecessary agony was caused; and the necessary agony, at best quite enough, was unduly prolonged. Properly studied, your town record, like the records of all your sister towns, teaches on this head a lesson of utmost value. No nation has any right to enter upon a war, domestic or foreign, unless it is ready promptly to meet the cost thereof in flesh and blood, as well as in money. It should not be a question of voluntary enlistment, or of mercenary service; but, if a community elects to fight, it should put its fighting force at the absolute disposal of its government. Conscription and the draft should be the order of the day, — the unmarried first, the married next; and, for the able-bodied, no exemption. Never, in the whole history of Massachusetts, was the ordeal of a war thus systematically met. On the contrary, as studied in your Weymouth annals, or those of your sister towns, after the first fierce outburst of ardor cooled, it is one long wearisome record of services sold and bought.

What was the result? The ranks of your regiments were never full; the morale of the men at the front suffered. The saddest sights I ever saw were those skeleton battalions in the last campaign against Richmond, that of 1864, — those few survivors grouped about the tattered colors, thrust into action yesterday, decimated again to-day, doomed to-morrow: and no recruits! Those were the men who went forward voluntarily, and at the first call to arms. No better material was

ever mustered; no braver troops ever returned an enemy's fire: but, under the system which always prevailed, the community from which they came either left them to take that fire to the end, or sent forward to associate with them the bounty-bought sweepings of your municipal gutters, the dregs of your civic cesspools. I speak of that whereof I know. It was not right, nor was it war: but it made war costly, long, murderous. Life was simply flung away.

Do you ask what course should have been pursued? What ought to have been done? I will tell you. With 30,000 men in the field, the State should have had 20,000 always at home in the training-camps; and when, after such terrible struggles as those at Gettysburg or in the Wilderness, word came that a regiment had lost 150 men, dead or disabled, on the notifying click of the wire the message should have flashed back that 175 men were on the way to make full the depleted ranks. The next day 175 fresh men, bearing as yet uncalled numbers in the draft, should have been ordered forthwith to report at the depots. That is business; that would be war. In place of it, you let your old regiments dwindle to skeletons, while you ever organized new; and, as the indecisive warfare dragged itself along, your towns competed with each other for bounty-bought flesh and blood. It was quoted at so much a pound.

This is the side of the record to be studied in your town-books; but it is a side of the record men do not like to study. Even reference to it is misconstrued. It is not popular! Yet here is the lesson to be borne in mind, that valuable to learn. That our young men rushed eagerly to arms in the early days of each conflict, no one denies; that they fought bravely and fell frequently, the names on your monuments and the flags in your cemeteries give proof. But, under your

methods of carrying on warfare, two of them died where one only need to have died; two indecisive battles had to be fought, where one vigorously followed up would have sufficed. It was so in the Revolution; it was so in the Civil War. That in either case it would have been so had the struggle been over your own hearth-stones, I neither suggest nor believe. Then, however, the outcome would have directly influenced home existence, and Weymouth development; not so a remote war, the echoes only of which disturbed the monotony of your daily village life.

Thus, with Weymouth as with other Massachusetts towns, the battles and campaigns, whether of 1776 or of 1864, and the sufferings and sacrifices incident thereto, were not momentous factors of fate. Indeed, as I now see it, since 1644 there has been but one considerable event in your history, one only which marked an epoch of far-reaching change. That event occurred on the 1st of January, 1849, when the South Shore railroad was opened to traffic, bringing Weymouth into direct and easy intercourse with the outer and active world. That inaugurated for you as a community a revolution in life, in occupation, in education, in religion and in thought; — that date, two hundred and fourteen years from the incorporation, marks the dividing line between the Weymouth of the provincial period, and your Weymouth of to-day. Already, in 1804, nearly half a century earlier, your first post-office had been established; quite an incident in your history. What facts has your Society preserved concerning it? Late in the eighteenth century stage coaches put in their appearance. They were a factor of change; what do you now know of the influence they exerted? The daily newspaper is one of the great educational forces of modern times; when did it first find its way generally to Weymouth? Not, I fancy, before 1850. What great economical

crisis, affecting every phase of life, has occurred in the history of the town? Once, and almost within the memory of men now living, Weymouth was commercial, as well as agricultural. It had been so almost from the beginning. It had iron-works in colonial times, and later a few small mills; but when was it, and from what causes, that it passed from an agricultural and a commercial to the manufacturing stage? Presumably, the coming of the railroad worked the change; and, in working it, modified the whole character of the town.

And here I submit, in these industrial, economical, social, religious and educational phases is the true field of study and accumulation, to which the local historical society should devote itself. The present is always familiar and commonplace; it is the past which interests. But our present will be the next century's past; and it is the mission of societies like this of yours to make the record of to-day fuller, more exact and more intelligible than is that of yesterday.

Of that "yesterday" of yours, extending practically from the 2d of January, 1644, the date of the ordination of the Rev. Thomas Thatcher, which closed the primitive period, to the 1st of January, 1849, which witnessed the opening of the South Shore railroad, — of that "yesterday," covering five years more than two centuries, I thus delivered myself on King-oak hill in my 1874 address:

"We are always accustomed to regard the past as a better and purer time than the present; there is a vague, traditional simplicity and innocence hanging about it, almost Arcadian in character. I can find no ground on which to base this pleasant fancy. Taken altogether I do not believe that the morals of Weymouth or of her sister towns were on the average as good in the eighteenth century as in the nineteenth. The people were sterner and graver, the law and the magistrate were more severe; but human nature was the same, and would have vent. There was,

I am inclined to think, more hypocrisy in those days than now; but I have seen nothing which has led me to believe that the women were more chaste, or that the men were more temperate, or that, in proportion to population, fewer or less degrading crimes were perpetrated. Certainly the earlier generations were as a race not so charitable as their descendants, and less of a spirit of kindly Christianity prevailed among them."

Speaking now in the light of subsequent investigation and long study, I can bear testimony that this passage was written neither in a depreciatory spirit, nor in one of pessimistic exaggeration. I have learned more since writing it. I acknowledge I do not, on better acquaintance, fancy that "prison-house of Puritanism" wherein our race had "the key turned upon its spirit for two hundred years." Frankly, I see truth in Matthew Arnold's indictment, — "a defective type of religion, a narrow range of intellect and knowledge, a stunted sense of beauty, a low standard of manners."

Let us for a moment, in a realistic mood, face the facts of that unlovely period. And first, of morals. The early church records of Weymouth no longer exist; and, perhaps, it is well for the good names of not a few of your families that the fire of April 23, 1751, swept away the old Meeting-house, and with it the documents there stored. The records of the Braintree church remain in part; and, of such as remain, I have made historical use. Those who care so to do may familiarize themselves with my conclusion.[1] So far as morality is concerned, the picture presented is not of a character which would lead us to covet for our sons and daughters a recurrence of that past.

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[1] See paper entitled, *Some Phases of Sexual Morality and Church Discipline in Colonial New England*, in Proceedings of Massachusetts Historical Society, June, 1891. (Proceedings, Second Series, vol. vi, pp. 477–516.)

Next, temperance: — As respects the *in*-temperance of that colonial period, I myself caught a youthful glimpse of its vanishing skirts. Distinctly do I recall the village tavern, the village bar-room, — for in Quincy, in my youth, bar-room and post-office were one, — and, moreover, the village drunkards. They were as familiar to eye and tongue as the minister, the squire, or the doctor. I see them now, seated in those wooden arm-chairs on the tavern porch, waiting to see the Plymouth stage drive up. The drunkard reeling home in broad daylight is an unknown spectacle now; then, he hardly excited passing notice.

Take religion next: — I submit in all confidence that the world has outgrown eighteenth century theology. It is a cast-off garment; and one never to be resumed. Bitter, narrow, uncharitable, intolerant, an insult to reason, the last thing it preached was peace on earth and good will among men. I have had occasion to examine into its utterances and to set forth its tenets. Those curious on the subject may there inform themselves.[1] You would not sit in church to-day, and listen to what was then taught, — an angry, a revengeful and an unforgiving God.

Schools: — Prior to 1850 the schools of Massachusetts were archaic, the primitive methods alone were in vogue; and not until after that time was any attention at all paid either to scientific instruction, or to the laws of sanitation. Charity! the care of the insane! the treating of the sick! In your Weymouth records for the town meeting of March 17, 1771, you will find the following: "Voted, to sell the poor that are maintained by the town for this present year at a Vendue to the lowest bidder." Do you realize what that meant, and who were included in the "poor that are maintained by

[1] Massachusetts: Its Historians and its History. Boston, 1893.

the town?" It was the old-time substitute for the asylum, the almshouse and the hospital. In those days the care of the demented was farmed out to him or her who would assume it at the lowest charge to the public. Even as late as 1843, and in the immediate neighborhood of Boston, naked maniacs could be seen confined in cages, or unlighted sheds, connected with the almshouse or abutting on the public way.[1] Or take this other Weymouth record of August 28, 1733, exactly one year before my ancestor, Rev. William Smith, was ordained your minister.

"Voted by the Town to give Twenty pounds to any person who will take two of the children of the Widow Ruth Harvey (that is) the Eldest Daughter and one of the youngest Daughters (a twin), and take the care of them until they be eighteen years old."

Twenty pounds in those days was $66.60 of the money of our days; and that in old tenor bills! A public inducement to baby-farming is not now held out. And so I might go on to the close of the chapter, did time permit. But Macaulay has said it all before, and why now repeat in more prosaic terms the tale of ancient wrong? Rather let me close with this passage from his History:

"It is now the fashion to place the golden age in times when noblemen were destitute of comforts the want of which would be intolerable to a modern footman; when farmers and shopkeepers breakfasted on loaves the very sight of which would raise a riot in a modern work-house; when to have a clean shirt once a week was a privilege reserved for the higher class of gentry; when men died faster in the purest country air than they now die in the most pestilential lanes of our towns, and when men died faster in the lanes of our towns than they now die on the coast of Guiana. . . . . There is scarcely a page of

[1] See the article entitled, *Insanity in Massachusetts*, by Dr. S. G. Howe, in *North American Review* for January, 1843, vol. 56, pp. 171–191.

the history or lighter literature of the seventeenth century which does not contain some proof that our ancestors were less human than their posterity. The discipline of work-shops, of schools, of private families, though not more efficient than at present, was infinitely harsher. Masters, well born and bred, were in the habit of beating their servants. Pedagogues knew of no way of imparting knowledge but by beating their pupils. Husbands, of decent station, were not afraid to beat their wives. . . . . The more carefully we examine the history of the past, the more reason shall we find to dissent from those who imagine that our age has been fruitful of new social evils. The truth is that the evils are, with scarcely an exception, old. That which is new is the intelligence which discerns, and the humanity which remedies them."

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APPENDIX.

The Number of Acres in each Person's Lot in 1663.

44	Bates.	27	Nash.
	Bayley.		*Newbury.*
	Berge.	2	Osborne.
	Bicknell.		*Otis.*
	Blake.	1	Parker.
	Bolter.	6	Phillips.
3	Briggs.		*Pitty.*
35	Burrell.	18	Pool.
	Burg.	7	Porter.
	Butterworth.	68	Pratt.
	Byram.		*Priest.*
	Charde.	11	Randall.
	Comer.	3	Reed.
5	Cook.		*Reynolds.*
	Down.	22	Richards.
	Drake.		*Roe.*
10	Dyer.	2	Rogers.
8	Ford.	36	Shaw.
28	French.		*Staple.*
	Fry.		*Streame.*
	Gilman.	22	Smith.
	Guppie.		*Snooke.*
2	Harding.	2	Taylor.
4	Hart.		*Thacher.*
29	Holbrook.	8	Thompson.
8	Humphrey.	25	Torrey.
34	Hunt.	21	Vining.
2	King.	30	White.
2	Kingman.	5	Whitman.
5	Leach.	1	Whitmarsh.
13	Lovell.		*Warrens.*
	Luddon.		*Woren.*

Total, 64.

Poll List of 1774.

1	Arnold.	27	Nash.
	Ayrs.	20	Orcutt.
	Badlam.	6	Phillips.
7	Bayley.		*Pitty.*
44	Bates.	18	Pool.
6	Beals.	7	Porter.
21	Bicknell.	68	Pratt.
6	Binney.	25	Reed.
32	Blanchard.	8	Rice.
35	Burrell.	22	Richards.
4	Canterbury.		*Ripley.*
1	Colson.	2	Rogers.
3	Copeland.	36	Shaw.
50	Cushing.	22	Smith.
11	Derby.	25	Thayer.
10	Dyer.	61	Tirrell.
	Eager.	25	Torrey.
8	Ford.	1	Trufant.
28	French.		Tufts.
	Goold.	3	Turner.
1	Gurney.	21	Vining.
29	Holbrook.	3	Vinson.
19	Hollis.	1	Wade.
	Hovey.	1	Ward.
8	Humphrey.	1	Waterman.
34	Hunt.	2	Webb.
	Jeffers.	2	Weston.
4	Jones.	30	White.
13	Joy.	5	Whitman.
2	Kingman.	1	Whitmarsh.
45	Loud.	4	Williams.
13	Lovell.		

Total, 63.